

# THE OLD MEETING HOUSE



REV. A. M. COLTON

GEORGE  
H·POND·













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THE OLD  
MEETING HOUSE

AND

VACATION PAPERS

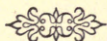
*HUMOROUS AND OTHER*

BY

REV. A. M. COLTON

COLLECTED FOR PUBLICATION BY HIS BROTHER

G. Q. COLTON



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Hilda

## INTRODUCTION.

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DURING his long and active ministry of fifty years, my brother—now in his eighty-first year—has written quite a number of papers, which have been published from time to time in newspapers and magazines, and which have greatly delighted his relatives and friends.

Some of these papers were prepared for special occasions, while others were thrown off during summer vacations. These latter are full of boyhood life and reminiscence.

Many friends have united in a request that these papers—or the best of them—be collected and published in book form, believing that, as they had afforded pleasure to his friends, they would give a like pleasure to a larger reading public.

These papers are too valuable to be forgotten and lost. They are instinct with life and living properties ; bright, fresh, breezy, wholesome, like his and my own native Green Mountain air. Humor has an accepted home-berth in all good speech and print. Shakespeare tells us of—

“ Mirth and merriment,  
Which bars a thousand harms, and lengthens  
life.”

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And the good Book says : " A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." We have tears enough in our human life at its best. Let us have more of sunshine, if we may ; or, if tears, then sunlight through them, and that will make rainbows.

In urging upon my brother the publication of these papers, I told him that one distinguished clergyman, uniting in the above request, had said to me that many worthy ministers of the olden time are remembered to-day as much for the fine vein of humor running through their writings as for anything they have left behind them.

My brother finally gave me the pa-

pers, to do with them as I might think best.

I have selected from the large number such as I thought would best please the reader.

The more sedate and sober readers will, likely, be best pleased with "Touches of the Hampshire County Ministers," and "Letter read at the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the First Church in Amherst;" while those who seek betimes a needful rest and relish in some "gayer hours" and "merry mild," or, perchance—

"Mirth that wrinkled Care derides,  
And Laughter holding both his sides"—

will find, maybe, their mood and occa-



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sion best met in those brisker touches, "The Old Meeting-House," "The Colton Tribe," "Reminiscences of Boyhood Life," and "New and Old."

In his apology for printing "The Pilgrim's Progress" John Bunyan wrote :

"Some said, John, print ; others said, Not so :  
Some said, It might do good ; others said, No."

G. Q. COLTON.



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# THE OLD MEETING-HOUSE.

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BOYHOOD RECOLLECTIONS  
OF 1812-20.

WHAT a grand sight it was to our young eyes ! With steps like a chicken's, we rounded the hill three-quarters of a mile off, and there, bursting upon our sight, was the village, with the old meeting-house in the centre. The *village* ! What a wonder that was ! More than twenty houses in plain sight ! Those village people must be great folks. High life, surely, to live in a *village*. The marvel was how



so many folks could contrive to live at all so near each other—as many as four houses within a quarter of a mile!

But the great thing was the meeting-house. That *was* a sight—to *us* it was. Just look at that steeple, 'way up there, seeming as if it would almost touch the stars! It was a huge house (so we thought)—“longer than it was broad”—and our eyes fairly swam with dizziness as we looked up from under the eaves. It wasn't painted outside nor in. No matter: we hadn't reached the conception of that, and so there was no drawback to our admiration. We hadn't read Mrs. Opie on white-lying, nor had we then seen white-lead. It was *our* meeting-house, and nothing could surpass it.

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And then to go inside! “And still the wonder grew.” Pulpit, pews, and pillars; stairs, galleries, walls, ceilings—all of them wonderful. Ceiling in sight, if you looked up far enough, and galleries midway; pulpit close, stiff, angular, straight, orthodox (in the literal sense), yet grand because so high. It seemed almost perilous for one to stand up there so high, and throw down words as boys do stones from a hill-top. But there was a sublimity about it that awed us. And our seat by that pillar in the north gallery, where First Person Singular sat, and saw, and wondered—and listened to the minister, ’tis said, with ears, eyes, and mouth all open! Better that than be sleeping in such a place.

And then the singers’ end of the

gallery. Old Deacon H. and pitch-pipe giving off those now venerable but almost fabulous antiquities—Majesty, Lenox, Exhortation, Greenwich, and “Fly swifter round” (we’ve forgotten the name)—fugues, where one party started off alone, and another followed on, and then another and another—bass, treble, tenor, counter, in most admirable confusion, leaving one in doubt how or where they would fetch up. And then to look down into those pews, lots of them, and lots of people in them. No chapel of ease this. No fire in winter, except the many in the foot-stoves. Not one cushion in the house. The people meant to “endure hardness.” Backs of pews bolt upright, and high as the head—wise precaution, no doubt, and

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seemingly with the same intent with which, in the case of the *literal* flock, the farmer adds the sixth rail. Good landmarks and fences are something. Large, square pews, for three times four, comfortably. And the seating—one-third part facing the minister, this and another third facing each other, and the remaining third facing the north or south, while the preacher was in the east. Thus all points of the compass received due attention. We have a dim speck of a recollection that it seemed to us a little queer to see people (the odd third in the pew) looking off on vacancy northward, listening to sounds coming from the direction of sun-rising. But we ought to have considered that faith cometh by hearing. This pew arrangement

was not without its advantages. People should be honest in the week, to look each other in the face in the meeting-house on Sunday. And for the other third part, suggesting the fear that more than that proportion are wont to be looking off mentally on things outside. But so uncharitable a thought did not trouble us in those days.

“If ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.”

That old meeting-house was never used as a chess-board. People were not moved about in the house, now to this part and now to that. They owned and occupied their pews, as they did their farms, in perpetuity. A family pew was a possession and a fixture. There, year after year, sat old Squire



T., and there Captain B.—almost all were squires or captains, except the uncles. We uncled nearly all in our neighborhood—we mean the men. It was Uncle Roger, and Uncle Jesse, and Uncle Joe—the latter affectionately and well-intended, certainly, but seeming, perhaps, to an outsider to be a little wanting in proper respect.

And our minister, Mr. D. “Reverend” had a meaning then. He was a godly man; we thought so then, and think so still. Our veneration of him went up almost to the degree of awe. Never, in passing us in the road (streets we hadn’t heard of then) did he get within five rods of us without finding our voices hushed, and our caps doffed. Courtly and condescending, grave but not austere, “affectionate in look and

tender in address," thinking great thoughts, and noticing small children, and, wherever meeting us, calling us all by our names. Small book in his left hand, and smaller sermon in the book (smaller in square inches), held up before him, and read from. Read "coldly correct and critically dull?" Not so at all; but with such varied tones and emphasis, such chastened fervor, such tremulous energy and earnestness, as did not fail to win the ear, inveterate sleepy-heads always excepted. Seldom an open gesture, and never a broad sweep of the hand; but the soul of eloquence was there, and came out not much helped nor hindered by "the bodily exercise which profiteth little."

We may as well confess a foible.

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“Three weeks from next Tuesday, and then *June Training!*” Expectation on tiptoe. The days counted, and the hours exactly, and no mistake. Stints done better than usual. The distance grows “small by degrees and beautifully less.” And Sunday afternoon before the Tuesday. “There’s the Captain!” Sure enough, Captain L. He was seldom at church on other Sundays. Why on this? Had we been older, we should perhaps have almost suspected a lurking vanity, as if he came this time not to hear, but to be seen. Possibly, to some of the knowing ones, it did seem as if the real meaning was “Here am I, the Captain L.; attention the whole!” But we hadn’t then got along so far into superfluity of naughtiness as to

be troubled much with such hard thoughts. Our childish simplicity didn't dive below the surface of the matter. Not unlikely we were too full of the Captain and the training (Sunday though it was) to allow of our philosophizing or moralizing very profoundly.

And now for the surroundings of the old meeting-house, especially the "Green" and the trainings on it. Training day! Long morning that from four to nine. Lucky we if chancing to fall in with a trainer having gun, cartridge-box, knapsack, and canteen! We were somewhat filled with his company in that mile or more. It seemed three miles to our eagerness. Codger in dress and gait (not we, but our trainer), but valor-

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ous, no doubt ; and bravely did he march up to Lieutenant J.'s, and, with gun pointing downward at an angle of forty-five degrees, give the customary salutation in honor of his superior. And now please walk in. Pine table, stone jugs, glass decanters and tumblers, unless pewter—and enough for all, trainer and satellites. And then to reach the brow of the hill and listen ! Shrill fife with Yankee Doodle, and drums with rub-a-de-dub. How the ears tingled, and the pulse quickened, and the steps—our steps—bounded on in double-quick time ! And there were the companies—two foot and one horse—Light Infantry, Floodwood, and the Troopers. We somehow liked the looks of the troopers when in motion. But *cui bono* ?

Their manœuvrings were a thing past our comprehension. An array somewhat imposing—horses, saddles, holsters, pistols, bridles, martingales, spurs, and such lots of brass; but chiefly the flannel red coats, and huge caps of bearskin, where the hair ought to grow. But how they could do much in real fight, was a puzzle. The horses could run away, if fed, and not wounded; and if they carried their riders with them, that was something. Safety in flight might come to be the main chance. The horsemanship didn't get its excellence from drilling in riding-schools. Those diverse joltings and hitchings and losings of stirrup didn't tell of assiduous culture in the science and art. The great thing seemed to be not to fall off, which in



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an unpleasant sense would have been "ground and lofty tumbling." The horses were not very orderly in their movement. Probably they did not understand as well as their riders did what all this meant, nor whereunto it would grow. War horses they certainly were not, in mien and mettle. They had snuffed more of harrow-dust than of villanous saltpetre. But the foot companies were a thing more comprehensible. Our town could boast of the best drumming in the whole regiment. We had the drum-major—honor enough for one town. But in our common soldiery, the rank and file, there was nothing remarkably good, nothing very orderly, except the orderly sergeant. When in line, the line was more a zig-zag, like a

Virginia worm-fence. The platoon wheeled round, and round it would have been, had it not been more a hollow square. It was always a mystery to us, that with such music, so much of it and so good, the soldiers in marching did not keep step better. The timing was really little short of execrable, especially in Floodwood. We had a notion that a soldier's air and movement should show a something spruce and prim, should be elate, resolute, precise, prompt. But our soldiers, many of them, stooped, and lagged, boggled, and jogged on badly. Some of them probably didn't care much if it was so, so they might escape the fine. Certainly, two of them, R. C. and J. G., whether in line or march, were always full of waggish-

ness and drollery, making wry faces and poking fun. It was a great shame.

The election of officers came, and that was a great affair. To see Mr. Such-a-One trudge out from the ranks, turn and face the company, take off his hat, and, with a jerk of the head as perilous as it was graceful, begin by thanking his "fellow-soldiers" for the *honor* they had conferred on him in choosing him to be corporal, and end with a promise to "serve them to the best of his ability." It was a set speech, formal and stereotyped, though never seen in print. This, in the manner of it, was the most *starchful* thing ever seen in Floodwood.

We remember to have experienced a slight feeling of the comical at hear-

ing some of the "orders" which were given out. "Eyes right!" "Eyes left!" What could that mean? And then, "Shoulder arms!" "Order arms!" "Ground arms!" and "Rest!" followed by the scattering ding and racket.

But our most vivid recollections are the *captains*—the special attraction—how they looked and carried themselves in full regalia. How Captain E., though tall, was pale-faced, round-shouldered, stooped, and lacked *presence*. How Captain T. was straight and vertical, even to bending backward; was pompous, pert, and jerk-tongued, and was *nothing but* presence. How Captain H. was small in stature, but made up for this defect by a *strut* so resolute and forceful as

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almost lifted him off from the ground. How Captain B. had a swaggering gait, like a Missourian, and swayed his head from side to side, thus showing to better advantage "the waving plume." How Captain L. was freckle-faced, but smart, and attended meeting one half-day in the year. The Captain T. was notedly a very close man in money matters. *Stingy*, they called him. And when the "treat" came, and the bottle of *new* rum went round, one soldier tasting, cast a significant look at another, saying (in whisper): "Not the choicest, but *cheap*!"

Memorable days to us, those trainings, and memorable place that meeting-house Green. Great days those for the taverns and stores. The toddy-stick went faster than the pump-handle.

The town pump was mainly supplemental, to put out the fires. Old and young drank alike ; many to mellowness, some to fuddleness, some few to the ditch, and all (nearly) to shame. Sad results to that people—wrecks and ruins, and many a drunkard's grave. May the fifth generation from that be so happy as to find, if possible, *its* blood run clear of the hereditary taint of rum and gin ! The trainings have gone by, and with them (*par nobile fratrum*) the taverns and tipplings—mostly. Go they may, and be choked in the sea. We shall shed no tears over that part of the matter.

In those early days the old Green was under two regencies, both of them arrogant and despotic : the trainers having dominion two days of the year,



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and the geese the rest. *Now* the *geese* are monarchs of the entire sweep. Both companies bipeds; both with regimentals, the latter having their own feathers, and the plain, plebeian shingle yoke; both warlike in aspect, and ready upon occasion to show fight; both with marchings and struttings and music of their own; and both somewhat addicted to the pool. Which of these two classes of bipeds were most needful to the public weal, or have done most to save the country from war, is a question for a debating club. The War of 1812 was then over; and certain it is not one of *those* "fellow-soldiers" has ever seen Florida, or Mexico, or Kansas, or Utah. Perhaps the House of Representatives in Washington have struck

for consolidation, and intend to monopolize the country's fightings, doing the whole themselves, representatively and sufficiently.

We should like, before taking off these yarns from the reel, to say a word about some of the *men* who in that olden time figured prominently in that place. One only will we name—Squire Blodget. *Square* Blodget was the title he went by. He was decidedly a character—almost an institution. Coarse and gruff, inside and out; passionate, pugnacious, and nettlesome; vexing himself with his own prickles, like a hedge-hog rolled up the wrong way; bushy head, thick lips, pug nose, small eyes; wrinkled, vinegar-faced, short-bodied, and, like the razor-seller, “with voice most musical, and not un-

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like an Indian yell." We have never since been able to read or think of old Diogenes, the cynic and snarling, without coupling (mentally) the renowned original and the unworthy copy together—though the *tub* part would never have answered for Squire Blodget, so restless was he, and in such perpetual motion. We supposed he must have slept, as other men do; for such wear and tear must have demanded rest, at least semi-occasionally. He was (to speak within bound) *about* the crossest, crookedest, crabbedest stick we ever set eyes on. He had a sort of ubiquity for all gatherings, large or small. Whoever else was not there, Squire Blodget *was*. He had one standing topic of talk, was familiar with it, and he never tired of it.

In all times and places he was everlastingly sputtering about "Jefferson and democracy." Sometimes he came to meeting of a Sunday, though seldom. But when he did come, it was to have, if possible, a talk with somebody about *Jefferson* and *democracy*. It was so much gained if, using all diligence, he got there in the morning; for that would give him the whole noon-time, at the tavern across the way, to talk against the forenoon sermon, and *for* Jefferson and democracy. The sermon was used for an exordium, but it somehow opened out straight and quick into Jefferson and democracy. The versatility seemed marvelous; but he had it, and it was equal to all exigencies. But June training was a long day, and then he had full

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swing, and was autocrat and inexorable. There was no escaping him. Whatever knot of men or boys might have gathered at the corner of the meeting-house, and might be talking quietly and cozily of common matters, in would come old Squire Blodget to have *his* say, and all the say, and always about Jefferson and democracy. The mustard-pot fell into the milk-pan. He was great for any discussion having only one side, and that *his*. He was "First Disputant" and "Senior Wrangler" in one.

Do not think, reader, that our Squire Blodget was the worst man extant. Not so. He had good qualities. He was frank-hearted and out-spoken. What he was at all, he was openly. He was himself, neither less nor more,

and not somebody else in disguise. *Politician* he was, but without the artifice and snakiness. You knew just where to find him—*him himself*, the genuine article, most unmistakably the real and redoubtable old Squire Blodget.

The old meeting-house has a sequel—a painful part, and a pleasant. When the warlike demonstrations *around* it began to pass away, then came “fightings within.” Two opposing sects claimed the house, and contended vehemently for the possession and use. Long and bitter was the feud. “From words they almost came to blows.” But they became sick of the strife. The business didn’t *pay*, as it never does. The parties, agreeing to differ, at length left off the conten-



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tion, and left the house, and built anew, each for itself. Then (some years later) the town, all parties uniting, voted, with most commendable public spirit, to repair the house, paint it handsomely, new shingle it, and let it stand, and tell their children's children of what their fathers were and did. And there "the old *white* meeting-house" *does* stand to-day: memento, silent, yet expressive, eloquent, instructive—one of the costliest, grandest, goodliest structures of the Green Mountain State.

We now and then go back to revisit the scene. We love to tread that same old Green in some calm hour toward sunset of a summer's day. We wish to go there alone, that we may the better indulge in musings and

memories of other days. We go around the house, now looking up to the eaves, now leaning against the brown-stone corner, and now seating ourselves on the steps in front. Home! *our* town and *our* meeting-house—place where we were born, and, we hope, were born again. Not another spot on earth so sets us to thinking. Loved scene to us, and—

“Meditation here  
May think down hours to moments.”

“Here much I meditate, as much I may,  
With other views of men and manners now  
Than once, and others of a life to come.”

## THE COLTON TRIBE.

### AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE LONGMEADOW CENTENNIAL,

OCTOBER 17, 1883.

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MR. PRESIDENT AND GOOD FRIENDS :

In our present quest we do not propose to go back to Adam, nor to Noah. We stop this side of the Flood and of the Red Sea. We begin at Moses—our Moses, *my* Moses, Mr. President—otherwise named Quartermaster George Colton. Let alone Egypt. Let alone England, except just to say that the said George afore-said came over from Sussex, a south-east county in the Fatherland, about the middle of the seventeenth cen-

tury. No matter for anything beyond. Enough, and good enough, this side. No great concern whether the first man ever named Colton was Norman, Swede, Celt, or Turk. Don't propose to go into fits over the question whether the Coltons across the brine were of princely blood or plebeian. That is no great shakes anyway. The real point is, What are *we*, and what *do* we? All else is fustian and prunella. We make personal confession, that for groping one's way by light of a tallow candle through "endless genealogies" we have, in this short life, no time, tact, nor taste. Had indeed a little rather not have come up (or down) from ape, tadpole, or clam, as the evolutionists would have it.

Quartermaster George Colton—on

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him we plant ourselves, and shake fists at all questioners and comers. We have in him an honorable and auspicious beginning. He is found a magistrate in Springfield at almost its earliest, and before Longmeadow is even a precinct, or is more than a pasture for flocks. Came among the first, if not *the* first, to what is now this goodly place and name. Was a wise master-builder, and laid here good foundations, whereof we this day are witnesses. Had nine children, and that was auspicious prophecy. And famous children they were—together redoubtable. Isaac, Ephraim, Mary, Thomas, Sarah, Deborah, Hephzibah, John, and Benjamin. There! Scriptural, Biblical, every one—patriarch and evangelist face to face ; both Tes-



taments drawn from, not to say exhausted; not a heathen name among them. If, from all the hoary registers of time, any man can cite the equal family record, let him stand up and be counted.

And if Quartermaster George was great, a still greater than he, perhaps, was his son Thomas, our Joshua, Captain Thomas Colton—like John Gilpin,

“A citizen  
Of credit and renown,  
A train-band captain eke was he.”

He was the hornet against the people who had dwelt in the land. For it came to pass when they set themselves to overcome him, he joined battle and fought against them; yea, he drave out from before him the Jebu-

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sites, the Hivites, and the Hittites (or subdued them under him), and gave their lands for a possession unto your fathers, and unto you, as it is this day. It was said of him that he could scent an Indian from as far as he could shoot one—and that was at long range. Turning to the old records, I find a minute in these words: "Capt. Thomas Colton died September 30, 1728." On the 6th of the following October Dr. Williams preached a sermon in which he gave Captain Colton a very extraordinary character, especially in the Indian wars, and "as a man of eminent piety." Reminds one of the centurion, and of Havelock; a soldier, yet fearing God with all his house. His monument, in the burial-ground near by, a stone slab, large,

strong, durable, of such fine grain and texture as to have withstood, without fleck or flaw, the storms and sunshines of a century and a half, testifies to this same high estimate and appreciation. And then Captain George Colton, son of Thomas, worthy son of worthy sire. Thus we have it—these military spangles and splendors—Captain, Lieutenant, Ensign, Sergeant, etc. And then as to actual service—the tug of war. My grandfather Aaron, with several others of the name, bore a part in the struggle for our independence. Sergeant Ebenezer Colton, with his company of minute-men, marched from here as far as to Brookfield for the rescue of Lexington, but was countermanded with the intelligence that the peril was past.

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But the Colton name fills a much larger space in the *civil* list and life of this grand old town. For a hundred years one-half, less or more, of the moderators of the meetings of precinct and town were Coltons. How readest thou? "At a meeting of the inhabitants of the precinct of Long Meadow, March 15, 1756, Capt. Isaac Colton was appointed Moderator; Sergt. George Colton, Ensign; Simon Colton and David Burt were chosen Committee, and Samuel Colton, Assessor"—Coltons four to one. One more instance out of many in the record. At the first meeting of Longmeadow as a town, Festus Colton was chosen Surveyor of Highways, and Luther Colton, Fence Viewer. So were the powers and prerogatives,

the honors and emoluments of high official station heaped upon the Coltons as the most capable and worthy among the people !

If now any one shall, in malicious and mischievous depreciation, insinuate that the Coltons were all the people, and had the honors of office as the college boy did the valedictory, being himself the whole class, we shall not stop to answer that despiser of dignities, except by the silence that means disdain.

And then, coming down, or rather up, to the queenly matron, ever venerable and fair—this church. Of the sixteen persons joining to organize this church one hundred and sixty-seven years ago, six were Coltons—four women and two men.

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I have just now alluded to numbers. If you carp at the Colton quality, we can easily balance the account by quantity. Those early family records—quivers full. We have looked at them, and have sat astonished one hour. Quartermaster George is found to have had nine children ; Thomas, fifteen ; Ephraim, of the second generation, seventeen ; Benjamin, of the third generation, fifteen ; and Benjamin, of the fourth generation, ten. Prophets and prognosticators of omen good or ill ! Census bureau and the multiplication table ! But take comfort. This is a great country, with territorial domain sufficient for a good many Coltons and some few others—a remnant at least. Glad to have it so ; for we seem to hear voices



saying, Give us room, that we may dwell.

Well, then, the just claim of the Coltons to precedence and preëminence before all the other Longmeadows, here and elsewhere: 1. We were first in the field, and possession is nine points of the law. 2. We are fullest in numbers—are the majority—are the people—not to insist that wisdom will die with us.

And then as to the parts the Coltons have played and are playing in the field of the world. True, we cannot point to a Colton as chief executive of the nation, nor of this Commonwealth. No matter. The greed and scramble for office, as now seen, would only soil our ermine. But we stand well on the roll. One or two

governors or alcaldes, one or two presidents of colleges, several college professors, educators not a few, physicians many, clergymen a goodly number, judges rare, lawyers a sufficient and satisfying scarcity.

But, after all, our grand distinction and boast is of our deacons. DEACON COLTON. Here, on this eminence, we plant ourselves, and boldly challenge all competition and comparison. We are owners of the deaconship here and elsewhere,

“From the centre all round to the sea.”

We are born deacons, as princes are dukes—to the manor born. Deacon is our escutcheon heraldic, our ensign armorial. True, indeed, in this democratic, leveling age and country, where

men have such petty jealousies and prejudices against office-bearing and authority, it may perhaps be as well, for the sake of peace and good-will, to allow the people the privilege of a voice and vote in putting Coltons into this as into other offices. But a Colton is a deacon any way, and every time, vote or no vote. He is deacon by very virtue of his being a Colton. To say of a Colton that he is a deacon is only to pronounce him a little more a Colton—an Hebrew of the Hebrews. In fact, we don't need the title; we are deacons without it, all the same. To think of distinguishing one Colton from another Colton by saying that one of them is a deacon, would be about as lucid an identification as to say of one John Smith that he is

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brother of James. Not to count from other branches of our genealogical tree, but only from my own especial bough or twig, I once found here thirteen deacons living contemporaneously, and a blessing to their time. My grandfather Aaron was deacon ; two or three uncles of mine were deacons ; a half-score of cousins were deacons ; my father was deacon ; three brothers of mine were deacons ; and a son of mine is deacon. Presumably this branch is no exceptional one, but is a fair sample of the entire ancestral tree.

I have not claimed, may it please you, that all the good deacons in the world are Coltons. I am too modest for that. I magnanimously and cheerfully concede that there are good people, some few at least, outside of the

Colton fold. I benevolently wish there were more of them. And here, while I am in this charitable and hopeful mood, and before I lose it, I may just add and admit that, since an humble self-estimate is a grace becoming in all, even in the best, it is conceivable that we Coltons, all of us, might not do amiss to wish ourselves a little better than we are. There is always room at the top.

And then, as to issues and results of intermarriages and interfusions, cross-currents and comminglings of blood and quality—ours, with the other tribes, the Elys, Cooleys, Blisses, Morses, Morrisses, Keeps, Chapins, Burts, Williamses, Bridgmans, Kingleys, Goldthwaites, Storrses, Wrights, Lawtons, Brockways, and I know not

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how many more ; whether in all this the Coltons have gained most, or given most of whatsoever things are lovely and of good report, may properly be left to any man's conjecturing. It is presumable, however, that our debtors they are.

From this account it is very plain, first, that the Coltons are a modest race, thinking others better than themselves ; and, second, that there are among them no humorists. How could there be ? Being deacons all of us, we are too sedate and solemn to relax into mirthfulness and levity. "Sober as a deacon !"

But I must draw to a close.

#### AN AVERAGE COLTON.

A plain man, of medium stature ;



rather spare in flesh ; hair brown, and scant as age advances ; small eyes ; prominent nose and chin, denoting push and persistence ; complexion red, white, and blue ; circulation and temperament a trifle slow ; not the quickest in catching an idea, but good at keeping it ; modest, as we have already said and sung, yet somewhat self-opinionated and set—not to say stubborn ; second or third cousin, maybe, to the Mr. Will-be-Wills ; of cheerful turn, and not addicted to long face and low murmurs ; laughs moderately, but laughs ; prefers to live in the south side of the house ; is sociable and neighborly ; likes to do obliging things, and does them ; thinks comfortably well of himself, and likes to have others think the

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same of him ; is affectionate in disposition ; loves his kindred and friends, and is given to hospitality ; loves a good story, and is apt to be a little prolix and tiresome in telling it ; is pretty sure to be found a singer, and no marvel if a chorister ; is neither a sun to blind your eyes, nor a comet to be gazed at wonderingly ; wouldn't excel in metaphorical pyrotechnics and gymnastics ; is not given to minding high things, but is reasonably content to pursue a quiet and even tenor ; is patient of toil, working with his own hands that which is good ; is fair-minded and fair-handed in business dealings ; has half an eye open for the main chance, but doesn't clutch frantically for the everlasting more ; is neither a millionaire nor a

pauper; is not crowned king, nor hanged a culprit; is seldom found in a palace, and more rarely in a prison; is a Democratic Republican in politics; is found among a gentler commonalty, the middling interest, the middle extreme in society—the upper middle, if you please; is not a saint by natural birth and blood (no man is), but is blessed with such make and molding, such natural disposition, aptitudes, tendencies, as fits one (if there be such fitting in any) to receive God's free grace, and be molded by it to diviner patterns, even the spiritual and heavenly.

On the whole, a fair sort of a man, this average Colton, found respectable, faithful, useful; serving God and doing good to men, and as likely as most to

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be saved finally by grace divine and grace alone.

We should not boast, and we need not blush, manward, over what the Colton race and name have been and done here in this dear old home, our Jerusalem, Longmeadow, name ever dear, and mother of us all; and have done also in the

“Land of our fathers, wheresoe’er we roam.”

And may I add one word in the name of all the tribes and families represented here to-day? To the Longmeadow residents, people and their honored pastor, having here and now their beautiful home and habitation, we tender, on this memorial anniversary, our hearty greetings and gratulations. All hail and farewell! our dear

old Longmeadow, venerable with age, and crowned with beauty! Her children rise up and call her blessed. May other generations of men and women, the good and gentle, the true and brave for the right, rise up here to bless the ancestral home, the nation, the world. Our ancestors here: we seem to see their venerable forms. We tread reverently by the graves where they lie in glory, every one in his own house. We sit, to-day, beneath the roof, and within the walls, where they worshiped the ever-living and loving God, theirs and ours. We walk beneath the elms that to them were a shadow from the heat. We tread on hallowed ground.

"A charm from the skies seems to hallow us here."

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We feel here an inspiration and uplifting to good endeavor to do well our part, and so be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

“ Our boast is not that we deduce our birth  
From loins enthroned and rulers of the earth ;  
But higher far our proud pretensions rise,  
The sons of parents passed into the skies.”



“BRINGETH FORTH OUT OF HIS  
TREASURES THINGS NEW AND  
OLD.”

ONE who has passed into the off-side half of his eightieth year, if he has had eyes, and has used them, must have seen some things, and some more. 1809-1889—the sweep of the century, and *such* a century! Likely enough he will be found thinking and speaking of things that used to be, and so contrasting those of once with those of now. And no marvel if, pondering over the changes he has seen, and been a part of, there come over him now and then an inkling of doubt, whether he be himself or somebody else. “The times

have changed, and we've changed in them."

As to size of families: From quivers full in the hands of the mighty, to arrows few in the hands of the weak. From hearing the last gun in the War of 1812, under the administration of James Madison, to voting for Benjamin Harrison, in 1888. From childhood to old age, and return: now Jamie, shaking his rattle, and now grandpa, leaning on his staff. From "playing horse" with boy and towstring, to "fears by the way," and to finding, or fancying, that "a horse is a vain thing for safety." From the ninepence silver piece, achieved for excellence in spelling, to diverse "sheepskins," college and other, stowed away somewhere safely, unless

the rats, ambitious of fame, have carried off the honors. From evenings worthily spent at home or in spelling-school, to evenings worthlessly thrown away on burnt-cork minstrels and comic operas—to say nothing now of the nightly haunts and hiding-places of bad boys, waxing worse and worse. From wood-pile to coal-bin. From tinder-box to friction matches. From tallow candle and pine-knots to kerosene and electric lights. From and-irons, and back-log, and blazing hearth, roasting one side of you, to furnaces, warming the whole house. From crane, and hooks, and kettle, and skillet, fixings and furnishings of the open fireplace, to ranges and stoves of a dozen patterns, every one of which is “better than all the others

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put together, sure as you live." From short-cake in spider, crossed off with fork, and turned up to the fire, for Aunt 'Rusha's visit this whole afternoon, to Frenchified bills of fare, lading and loading, for clubs, clans, and cliques, various, and too many. From barreled apple-sauce, hard-frozen in attic in winter, to Barr's ice-creams, all the year round. From home-living and "hamely fare," to Delmonico's. From homespun and "hodden-gray and a' that," to merinos, superfines, and soft clothing from Great Britain and Hail Columbia. From handicraft, tax and strain of human muscle, to enginery and horse-power by water and steam—perhaps by electricity, the other motors being too weak and slow. From musical scythe and whetstone,

to ding and clatter of mowing-machines. From plain and sensible hand-rake, to land lobster, or something resembling it, and named horse-rake, with its pranks of kick-up and touch-down. From spinning-wheel and distaff, presided over by grandmother, in her might, majesty, and dominion, to power-looms and spinning-jennies, tended by children who ought to be at school. From splitting oven-wood for mother, and receiving the promised "turn-over" in sumptuous payment therefor, to having seen brick ovens gone far past into innocuous desuetude. From that nondescript, ineffable piece of humanity, a boy of sixteen, with swarms of whims and fancies playing round his head, to an octogenarian, sobered, solidified, settled into

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facts and full persuasions, which no battering-ram can shake. From mild-mannered toot-toot of tin horn, announcing to all the world and the rest of us the coming in of mail coach once a day, to screech and shriek of car whistle nearly all the time. From neck-breaking, all-night jouncing in stage coach over the sham and semblance of highways, to palace and sleeping-car on smooth and level iron paths. From journeying diligently six days from present to native home, to compassing the same distance in one night—keeping pace the while with the growth of Jonah's gourd, and sleeping all the way. From adze and broad-axe, hewing *timbers*, ushering in an epoch, a half-day house-raising—to say nothing of doughnut and demi-



john—to circular saws and scantling, beams and posts, that set the winds a-snickering, and bid the bibulous, if any, stay at home and be dry. From training-days and musters—mimicry of war, but surely bound to save the country—to the country *saved* in and through the actual and terrible strife, and that too by minute-men and volunteers.

From city and country stores selling liquors to young and old, with other goods reputably, to saloons, a nuisance, execrated, and going into perdition. From the monarchy of blood-letting and calomel for all aches and ailments, to the democracy of the “pathies,” ministered by wise men, and by men otherwise. From the small four-page weekly, coming from

far, to the large eight-page dailies, brought to your door morning and evening, and taxing too heavily your time and reading. From reading London news fifty days old, to reading at our breakfast-table this morning, this morning's doings in Parliament in that city. From high pulpits, beetling cliffs, to platform level, allowing preacher a hand-to-hand grapple with hearer in the good fight of faith. (Sounding-boards had not ventured into the high latitudes of us and the North Star.) From the high-backed, and doored, square pews for hearers, facing three of the four winds, to low and open slips facing both minister and music, and saying to the stranger, "Come, and welcome." From shypiping bass viol, if tolerated, to high-

sounding organ, rejoiced in. (Fiddle, if introduced, would have raised a circus.) From old Mear, Windham, All Saints, St. Martins, and Dundee, substantial and satisfying melodies, to swarming music-books, with *tunes*, so-called, some of which are good, some very good, and some altogether lighter than vanity. From the grand forefathers and foremothers, with their stanch and vertebrate beliefs and convictions, to—I will not say magpies, standing around, and chattering at whom and what they neither attain to nor comprehend. Let us rather think and say with the incomparable Lincoln, “With charity for all, with malice toward none.” And still, no duty binds or bids us shut our eyes and ears to the facts in this matter. “For

as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against."

Any amount of misconception and misrepresentation. Some are telling us that people, clerical and lay, of our olden time, were fed on Calvinism and catechism, bitter herbs and unleavened bread, and were thereby made sour, gloomy, unhappy. The allegation is fictitious and false. Read, on this point, "*Sprague's Annals*," and stand corrected. With them, indeed, were the catechism and the Puritan theology, which had stood, and still stands, the test of time and trial—*doctrines*, not the travesty and caricature of them, quite too often charged to their account. And men didn't die of the catechism. The writer of these lines was instructed in that old symbol,

and, marvel to say, is alive still, notwithstanding. The people of Westhampton are said to have been "brought up on the catechism." Thank you. I wish there were more Westhamptons—the clear heads and bright hearts, the Bible-reading, the Sabbath-keeping, the society and social life, the intelligence and thrift, and whatsoever things are honest, and true, and of good report. It is in no spirit of bitterness that a passing reference is here made to two or three things, the heaviest and hardest, still charged against the beliefs of the evangelical orthodox in time past and present ; men of the present *punished* for Adam's sin ; glorified saints in ecstasies over the suffering of the lost ; willingness to be a castaway a prime

evidence of piety ; “ hell paved with ” —but I stay my hand. Now, as to these things so persistently pressed against the memory of those whom we should revere : If one who was there and is here, one who sat for years under the teachings of Leonard Woods, Moses Stuart, and Edwards A. Park, of Andover ; one who heard the preaching of Revs. Nettleton, Finney, and Burchard ; and has listened to thirty and more of our college presidents, to perhaps as many theological professors, and to a hundred, less or more, of our most noted preachers, masters in our Israel, from Beersheba even unto Dan, during a long day of our short life—if such an one, speaking for himself only, of what, in these matters, *he* has or has not seen and heard, may



be allowed to give and leave his personal testimony, then this deponent saith : that it has never once fallen to him to hear, from one of the above-named men, one line or syllable in inculcation or endorsement of one of the hard things referred to above. *Bible doctrines*, may it please your honors, not the falsehoods and fictions in place of them, or connected with them. There shall be here no plea for aught that was wrong or weak in what the fathers held and taught. They were not perfect. None are. I am afraid they are but poorly understood. A style of piety sedate, but not gloomy ; a little rugged, but kindly ; not so fine and nice, but of firm texture and enduring ; not confident and assertive, yet intelligent,

rooted in convictions, and ready always to render a reason ; a piety built up on both Testaments, the Old and the New ; a piety to which those grand words, Law and Righteousness, meant something ; a piety drawing strength and sweetness from the One Hundred and Nineteenth Psalm, and from John's First Epistle ; a piety thankfully testifying with the Psalmist, "*Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.*"

Does a voice come, saying, These terrible things *were* held and taught in this or that century back of our present ? Oh ! sirs, it hadn't occurred to us as a thing of practical moment to us to go back and give answer for all the wrongs of all time. We were speaking of the present century and

the men in it ; and all we claim for them is that they were good and noble for their time and the light given them. It is not given to one age to have the wisdom of all the ages. We have not all of us lived forever ; and it is just possible that some of us to-day are still a little short of perfection absolute. Let us try to be modest.

Easy enough to sit back in our soft chairs, and be self-complacent, and wish our fathers had been wiser. Not so easy to be ourselves climbing "Hills Difficulty." Most of us find it about as much as we can do to keep *ourselves* somewhere. If our fathers came short, let us out-do them in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth, if we can. Likely enough we can, if we will. Why this interest

so great in the old-time beliefs and teachings? Are we better than the fathers? If we are, let us not boast, but be thankful. If we are not, let us strive for the mastery. Till we are, it is hardly a handsome thing in us to be throwing stones. If we would be better, the law is open, and there are deputies. There is always room at the top.

I have spoken of progress in *material* things. If now one ask: Has there been a like progress in religious things? Have we gone on with equal step from old to new in moral and spiritual wisdom and goodness? Have we left the fathers lagging and late in the greater concerns of man? To questions of this sort our answer is, Yes and No; and each in its sev-

eral respects. No, as to Bible, the one Book, and lived upon; as to the law-work and breaking up of the fallow ground in conviction of sin and conversion to Christ; as to Sabbath observance and sanctuary attendance; as to nurture of the religious affections, the inward, spiritual life by meditation and prayer; as to keeping the home and heart with all diligence; as to reverence for sacred things; as to contentment with slow and honest gains; as to careful avoidance of worldly amusements, frivolities, plays, and pastimes; as to consistency, well looked to, between our manner of living and our prayer "that we may hereafter lead a godly, righteous, and sober life." In these and the like things, No.

And now the *Yes* : Larger windows to let in sunshine ; better understanding and acceptance of the grand rule, “ In essentials, unity ; in unessentials, liberty ; in all things, charity ; ” a happier blending and proportioning of law and gospel in preaching, appealing not less perhaps to fear of God’s wrath, but more to his love in Jesus as preëminently *the* constraining motive to repentance and holy living ; not now a reserve standing on cold conventional proprieties, but, instead, a warmth and glow of manner, showing the preacher affectionately desirous of you, and bent on plucking you as a brand ; a larger union and fellowship among Christians of different names ; care and cultivation of those little courtesies, civilities, amenities, throw-



ing a charm over the social life ; institutions founded and endowed liberally for relief of all manner of misfortune and want ; the Sisters of Charity going everywhere, carrying gifts and healing ; brotherhood and sympathy, lending solace and succor to fellow-men in every clime, on every shore ; grand organizations for mission work and moral reform ; slavery, so recently our curse and reproach, now wiped out, as one wipeth a dish, and turneth it upside down ; the wondrous uprising against that devouring monster, Intemperance, and all his myriad aids and abettors ; uplifting forces all around us, intended and adapted to make this world brighter, happier, better—a paradise regained.

Yes and No, then. No, as to depth;

Yes, as to breadth. No, as to standing firmly on the feet ; Yes, as to reaching out long arms. No, as to rich soil prepared ; Yes, as to the flowers appearing—the roses of Sharon and the lilies of the valley.

And so we say : On the whole, Yes, and with gladsome emphasis. Strange if it were not so, with the world's history for our instruction, and the world's hope for our inspiration ; the night far spent ; the day-star rising.

“ Watchman ! does its beauteous ray  
Aught of joy or hope foretell ?—  
Traveller ! yes ; it brings the day—  
Promised day of Israel.”

The old and past, whatever it was made or was, is gone from us. The new and now is ours—is open door

and opportunity, the grandest ever known. Let us, then, in joyful trust, and loving loyalty, commit ourselves to Him, our gracious Lord, in whom are all our springs—

“ Our high endeavor, and our glad success,  
Our strength to suffer, and our will to serve.”

The age we live in, like the natural world around us, is full of wonders. Let us be wakeful, observant, reflective, reverent, not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, ready unto all good works. Let us not sleep as do others. Let us not be dull of seeing.

“ Earth’s crammed with Heaven,  
And every common bush afire with God ;  
But only he who *sees* takes off his shoes :  
The rest sit round it, and pluck blackberries.”

EASTHAMPTON, MARCH 28, 1889.

BRIEF TOUCHES CONCERNING SOME  
OF THE MINISTERS OF THE HAMP-  
SHIRE, MASS., ASSOCIATION FIFTY  
YEARS AGO—OR NEARLY.

HEMAN HUMPHREY, D.D., PRESIDENT  
OF AMHERST COLLEGE,

Was passing his grand climacteric.  
Had parted with his strongest years,  
yet retained not a little of his best  
self. Of medium stature. Slightly  
inclining to stoop. Meek bearing.  
Head carried a little to his left side.  
Eyes toward the ground in walking.  
Of pleasant manners. Of a quiet hu-  
mor. Fatherly, like President Day, of  
Yale: *par nobile fratrum*: they two,  
with President Griffin, of Williams,  
forming a triumvirate—perhaps just

the style of men for that special time and duty. Dead line not yet drawn at forty. "I said Days should speak." Sound mind. Strong common sense. An excellent counselor. A sound and instructive preacher. Didn't "fire up," as do some, though seen at times under a power of feeling which, but for result of conventionality and early habit, would likely have come out in eloquence impassioned and grand. Early training under the old, but waning, dispensation and glory of powdered hair and knee-buckles; and so, dignity, restraint, reserve, repression. Break those bands in sunder, beloved, and cast away those cords from *you*. "Please be seated," always his word of greeting, on your entering his room. Gave me a cordial welcome on my

coming to Amherst. Was never wanting to me. Was moderator of council, and gave the address to the people at my ordination. Noble family of children. Humphrey—Porter; good blood and stock—a genuine nobility. May other such arise!

REV. NATHAN PERKINS, OF SECOND  
CHURCH, AMHERST.

Son of a minister, Dr. Nathan Perkins, of West Hartford, Conn., whom I remember to have seen and heard in my college days. Stately and venerable form, a little bent. Bland, open face, and clean shaven. Skin soft and smooth as an infant's. Hair of light color, scant, and well combed. Scrupulously neat in person and dress. Of pleasant manners. Always cheerful.



Lived in the south side of the house. Never saw a frown or wrinkle on him. A fair preacher. Made for me the ordaining prayer. Was every way a pastor to his flock. Interested himself, and was helpful to them, in all their affairs. Was "Father Perkins" before he was fifty; and, when taken up suddenly at the age of sixty-two, a sorrowing people said: "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof."

If "father" and sixty-two be old, what is eighty? I don't know, and you needn't tell me.

OF REVS. REID, OF BELCHERTOWN,  
AND DANFORTH, OF HADLEY,

I saw but little. The former, tall and of dark complexion, may have

been of silent and moodish turn. Gave charge to pastor. Mr. Danforth, of heavier mold, physically—perhaps not stronger of the two, mentally. Made the introductory prayer. Was blessed with a comfortable measure of simplicity and unwisdom: began to build a house for a settled home, and the people began to talk about another minister. Charles Lamb says, that “a man who has not a drachm of folly in his mixture, has *pounds* of much worse matter in his composition.”

REV. GEORGE COOKE, OF NORTH  
AMHERST.

My near neighbor and good brother. Of notably fine physique. A handsome man. Those locks, pendent from his brow, were proud of him, perhaps

he of them, though he was not given to childish vanity. A sterling mind—powers above the common mark. Sound judgment. You might “lean hard” on the advice he gave you in practical affairs. Of wide intelligence—well posted in goings-on in church and state. A manifoldness and many-sidedness. Could have filled well any one of a half-dozen of our callings in life. Would have made an admirable teacher—it was in his blood and tribe. Impressed you as one knowing more about your business than you did. Handy and handsome, wasn’t it, to have for our minister a man so broad-minded, so excellent in counsel in our own every-day concerns? Here was half his hold on his people. A little allowable pride—and don’t blame them

for it. Was wiser and greater for others than for himself. Could write an admirable essay for Association. Did so, once and again. *Sermon* writing was irksome to him. Said he *couldn't*, till pressed and pushed to it for to-morrow's service. I have found him at tea-time on a Saturday P.M. with preparation of less than half of the first sermon of the two. His execution was marvelously rapid. When, at the late exigent hour, he *did* take his pen, there was *work indeed*. No flutter, no hysteric energy, but a calm and sustained bent and concentration of strong powers, well in hand. Better, I think, could it have been so with him, better for both sermon and self, the patient quill-driving through earlier and longer hours. We are differently

made, I know ; but there is a best way for "the generality of mankind in general." I never felt reconciled to his leaving his people and the ministry, when so loved and so strong. I sadly missed him from his place. I once sought him out at the Custom House in Boston. I could not bring myself to feel that a clerkship there was the place for one of *his* talents and training. I have known but little of his movements in these later years. Shadows fell upon him ; he was afflicted very much. He held and filled a place of honor—the presidency of a college,—for a time, and was variously useful. I am afraid his later years had little of sunshine. I am hoping and expecting to learn that his end was fulness of peace and joy.

REV. JOHN MITCHELL, OF THE EDWARDS CHURCH, IN NORTHAMPTON.

The Association's umpire on all questions of ecclesiastical polity and usage. A scholarly man. A thinker. A calm man—strength in sitting still. Did a thing thoroughly, or let it alone. Words few, and directly to the point. His contributions of essay or criticism always highly valued, and felt to be too seldom. You would shrink from reading a shallow and slipshod paper in his presence. He would *kill* you if you did—would do it with infinite gentleness and goodness, but would *do* it—making an end of *it* and you. Didn't laugh, but smiled. Bland, pale face, mirroring the whole man. The Edwards Church have had grand men. A highly favored people; but among



all their ministers (and I have known them all), perhaps by no one better than by him have they been nourished up in the words of faith and good doctrine. A more vigorous, forceful manner in the pulpit might have been well, but the richness of the matter went far to content those with whom the substance is more than the sound. That pallid face didn't bespeak robust health, or possibility of vehemence anywhere. The shaking would have torn him.

REV. JOSEPH D. CONDIT, OF SOUTH  
HADLEY.

Of tall and slender frame; erect and straight, but no strain nor stiffness. Thin, pale face. Not strong in health. Graceful, not gracious, in his

manners. A chastened ease and affableness. No hint of the courtly or the patronizing. A born gentleman, in the best sense of that term. The *to propon* was in every nerve and vein of him. A sweet saintliness, a singular delicacy and refinement, shrinking from touch or sight of anything gross or rude. A coarse jest or word would have hurt him like a blow. You wouldn't speak that word to *him*. It was "awful goodness," without the awfulness. "A bishop blameless;" and, in saying it, you meant singularity and emphasis. He was human. We all are. But most of us are *very* human. Providential indeed—so we all said—that one so refined, so pure, so saintly, was sent to South Hadley, a plastic power there, so helping to

mold the Mount Holyoke Female Seminary from its beginnings to the grace and goodness for which we give it all praise.

REV. CHARLES WILEY, OF FIRST  
CHURCH, NORTHAMPTON.

Of medium stature. Of agreeable manners, perhaps a little more spruce and nice in his ways than most. Did and said things æsthetically. Didn't thrust his hand toward you at greeting, but presented it gingerly. Didn't say bluntly, "How *are* you, Billings?" but said blandly, "How do you do, sir?" Of fine mind, and well trained and stored. Had his elect model of style in Robert Hall, and followed him — afar off, of course — but as closely, perhaps, as is well for the best

effects. That murmur and musical flow, the stately and sustained movement, and the well-rounded periods—not healthful to common mortals. *High*, moreover, and they cannot attain unto it. Most of us are not giants, and Saul's armor is for giants. Better for our best fighting, as fighting is nowadays, better the sling and five stones from the brook—stones smooth, or not *so* smooth. But not to judge another in a matter of this sort. Every man in his own order. Brother Wiley was an excellent preacher. Ranked high as a sermonizer. Was laborious in sermon writing.

REV. GEORGE A. OVIATT, OF THE  
BRAINERD CHURCH, BELCHERTOWN.

Of slight, fragile mould, pliant, yet

resilient ; one of those tender plants that bend under the wind, and lift themselves when the pressure is off. Of fair abilities ; and the five talents, put to usury, gained other five talents besides them. Came direct from Yale Theological Seminary to Brainerd Church as their first pastor. Was happy in his relations here, and prospered in his work. Perhaps never great, as some men count greatness, but *good*, all through and always. Kind, gentle, tender-hearted, sympathetic, a Barnabas, masterful and a charmer wherever sorrow was. A clinging vine that crept up around thousands of hearts, and whose tendrils, once fixed, didn't lose their hold. Served the Master worthily in six churches in turn, until, wearied by his

toils, not weary of them, the springs of life worn out, he passed peacefully, not long ago, to his home and rest in heaven.

One especial thing should be told for a memorial of this brother. There had been bitter strifes in the Old First Church in Belchertown. A portion of the members left, and were organized to be a new Congregational church, the Brainerd, to which young Oviatt was called. Thus *two* churches, of the same order, side by side, after and *because* of such alienation and division. Time passes, and the Old Church is found dismissing their own pastor, and inviting the Brainerd Church to return home, and bring their pastor with them, to be the shepherd of the reunited flock. 'Twas done ;



and of that flock, so drawn together, Brother Oviatt was for years the sole pastor, happy in his work, successful, beloved, cherished. Rare the instance; and rare in the brother that combination of qualities, wisdom, prudence, worth, and work, which could make the instance possible and actual. *Vale, vale*, Oviatt, my Yale classmate and brother beloved.

REV. MORRIS E. WHITE, OF SOUTH-  
AMPTON.

Of massive, solid mold, physically; shoulders as if to bear up an Atlas. Could quickly have floored the stoutest of us at wrestling. Was an able preacher, and for years was greatly favored in his work. Mighty shakings in Southampton, and rich ingather-

ings. But by and by a *frost* touched him, a killing frost, and nipped his root, and then he fell. His beloved wife was snatched from him by the fell destroyer. Woman of rare beauty and loveliness and culture. He found her in Andover, the favorite teacher in Abbot Female Academy. He had the sense and sentiment to know her worth. Her removal was to him a stunning and bewildering stroke, which quite unmanned him. Months after the storm broke upon him, calling at my house in Amherst, and seeing my wife, and told that she was once a pupil of his wife, in Andover, he burst into tears, and wept for an hour like a child. Some here present can recall the sad story. A pulpit charge still upon him, and a people accustomed to

look for good preaching ; Sunday will come, and the sermons must. Pressed as under a mountain weight ; his home desolated ; nerves unstrung ; the very air of his study freighted with gloom ; sense of utter impotence and impossibility to so much as think anything as of himself ; and now a drop from the cup, a convenient extract from another's pen, and next time, likely, the same, and a little more, just to ease the burden this once ; and with no thought, or little thought, of the issue that will come, and will not tarry. The inevitable *did* come ; the complaint, the council, the trial, the dismissal, the demission from the sacred office. Years have since passed. I make no plea for the things charged—the cup or the quotation. I make no question

that the council did wisely and rightly. And yet, to-day, in recalling to mind the scenes and the man, I think, and care to think, of little else but of the blow that crushed him to the earth. Charity never faileth. Gently, my friends, gently toward a reed, not shaken only, not bruised only, but broken in the midst.

REV. HENRY NEIL, OF HATFIELD.

Of about medium stature. Of peculiar build. Shoulders drawn up around his neck as it had been a blanket shawl. A great favorite in scenes of college life. Captured and carried off one of President Humphrey's daughters—a prize indeed. I was present at the nuptials. Lively as a cricket. Something of the French-

man in looks and ways. Genial and jovial among familiars, bubbling up and brimming over with good humor. A fine mind, and finely furnished. A quick and keen discernment. Ready of speech. Great in an off-hand criticism on sermon or essay; beginning and ending *his* apt remarks, while most of us were getting ourselves together. An able and instructive preacher. Wrought a good work in Hatfield, and left us all too soon.

And now, *per contra*,

REV. WARREN H. BEAMAN, OF NORTH  
HADLEY.

Behold the man. A patient, plodding toiler, faithful for the Master, with good will doing service, and heartily, as unto the Lord. Took

charge of a small church, and had the joy of seeing that his labors were not in vain in the Lord. Much to discourage him in frequent deaths and removals, yet patiently toiling on to strengthen the things that remained. In all things showing himself a pattern of good works; in doctrine, uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech; an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Preached *the Word*—preached the *Gospel*; not *about* the Gospel, nor about the plumage of birds, and the rings of Saturn, and “the thingness of the this.” And now, after a well-spent day, still honored, and still useful variously, he is, as a gracious reward, enjoying a serene and tranquil evening, in prospect of

the blessed to-morrow—the crown, the white robes, the everlasting song. And we heartily salute him with our *Servus in cælum redeas.*

And now, last, not least,

REV. JOHN H. BISBEE, OF WORTHINGTON.

Our mountain man and minister. And the minister whose pendulum of journeyings swung patiently between Worthington and Chesterfield during the millennium of twenty-eight years—to say nothing now of the far more of *home* and *parish* travel over hill and dale, and

“On the mountain tops appearing”—

ought long ago to have received a veteran's life pension of a thousand



pounds a year. Head of a large and flourishing church : for, in those early ages, his and mine, our neighbors, Japheth and Arphaxad, had no craze for gold mines, no craving for a home in sight and hearing of rail and whistle ; nor were our hill-tops and hill-sides made bare of choice trees and saplings to feed prairie fires and fevers. Grand old town, this Worthington—Hebron of Hampshire ! and well did the shepherd there feed his flock, and gather the lambs. And his works do follow him. To-day a man has no right to be buried or born there without Brother Bisbee's leave and blessing. Retiring after a toilsome day to rest himself a little for the longer journey and the better land, he has left behind him upon his

beloved people his own rare personality and impress, to remain there till the mountains be removed, and be carried into the midst of the sea. His footprints still on every rood and rod of that domain; his tears still enriching the soil; his hand still carrying bread and balm; his voice and smile of sympathy and gladness, and the soft memory of his virtues, lingering yet,

“While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy.”

THE OLD WEBSTER'S SPELLING-  
BOOK.

THIS gray goose-quill has already scrawled for the *Gazette* some few things that were, or seemed to be, in my Vermont home and life, in my times of old: the scenery and scenes; the village green; the meeting-house, and minister and music; the trainers and troopers; the tavern and tippling; the old school-house, thoroughly warmed *once*, and once for all; the school-ma'am, venerable for antiquity and wisdom—so she seemed; the pastimes and plays—husking, paring, and other “bees;” the thousand and forty-seven fictions and fancies that play round a boy's head, both when he sleeps and

when he wakes, or, the kinks within it, and hard to be straightened out.

But there is yet one thing more, a thing masterful and preëminent, whose high praises are specially deserving to be said and sung, namely :

#### OUR OLD WEBSTER'S SPELLING-BOOK.

It lies before me, the genuine article : not the identical copy I used and was brought up on, long time ago, but of the same edition. It looks old, as do the rest of us, old people. It is nearly as old as I am, and has come spelling its way along down through two-thirds of a century, to these odd times. How long it had lain in the Boston Antiquarian bookstore where I found it thirty-five years ago, I cannot tell. It is an institution—yes, a uni-

versity. It has trained and strained more heads than any other book of the kind ever did, or perhaps ever will. Later editions have been sent out ; but give me the *old* wine, which to my liking is better. Very plain, even homely, in outward appearance. Never mind. Homely people are generally the best. They *have* to be—making up for the homeliness without by the handsomeness within. It is a blessed necessity. The back of the cover is of coarse linen cloth—very coarse—threads within sight of each other. The sides of cover are of layers of brown paper, with an over-all of thin, blue paper. The paper and pages within look as if they might have come from a mill using bleached straw and slacked lime, with a little sulphur thrown in to give

the tinting. No evidence of iron-board and smoothing-plane. Please do not bring here your microscope, nor criticise sharply. One excellence the paper certainly has: it is tough and strong—like the rugged and sturdy virtues of people in the olden time—which is more and better than can be said of much of our modern letter-press.

And now as to the *contents*, the meat and marrow. Quite a book in size—one hundred and sixty-eight pages, and nuts of things in it, all through. The Preface we didn't have to read. But the next half-dozen pages—"Analysis of Sounds"—we, in our school, had to commit to memory and recite. This amazed us, and does still. Just to think of a child eight or

nine years old required to recite understandingly the opening sentence: "Language, in its more limited sense, is the expression of ideas by articulate sounds."

You might about as well set that child to comprehending those vast themes, verities so important, but how profound, viz.: The wherefore of the why, the thingness of the this, and the thusness of the thought. Makes one think of Horace Greeley, who, after reading a grandiloquent communication sent to him for the press, said of it, that it "obfuscated all his intellects, and circumgumfrigobrightificated all his comprehensibilities."

And come to the A, B, C page. In my times of old we children learned our A, B, C's at school, and not at



home, from lettered blocks and other knick-knacks, as in these latter days. Some of those first things at school were quite impressive to the looker-on and listener. One case we well remember, and a case it was. Stubby boy, round-faced and ruddy. Leaned up hard against school-ma'am. Began low. Teacher said, "A little louder, Jamie." And didn't he! "A-yah, B-yah, C-yah;" and with *such* vehemence! No blame if you shall think that the ceiling shook, and the air was torn, and that the black ants, foraging on his dinner in the entry, lifted up their heads, startled, and wondering whether it was thunder, or only an earthquake. It might have been both. And see the chap fixing his lips for the next explosion. Or perhaps he is

looking around to see if his splendid achievement is duly appreciated. If so, up comes the school-ma'am's hand—pointing penknife between fingers—and deftly touches the side of his head, and swings that head around to right front, and to the great business in hand—preparing this blossom or bud of possibilities for his high vocation—perhaps of field-driver, or constable, or corporal, or President of the United States—who can tell?

High day when we advanced to Table No. 2—bag, big, bog. But the almost dizzying elevation when we ascended and attained to Table No. 4—baker, brier, cider, crazy. It is very observable, this placing *crazy* next after *cider*. Here are fact and philosophy, cause and effect; indeed, a

temperance lecture entire. How those tables of spelling lessons, once mastered, cling to the memory ! The first word given you, and your memory runs on to the next, and the next : much as in a line of bricks set up on end, and set a-going. The rough and tumble of threescore years and more have scarcely dimmed the page.

Our spelling-book—we mean the one we bought in Boston—has about it a look of yellow sorrowfulness ; induced, no doubt, from its frequent failures to make good spellers, notwithstanding its having done its best ; very much as with the moon, her sad face, because of the sad sights she has been compelled to see with those great eyes looking down nightly on this mundane sphere. You will be told

that some men, and some maidens, too, haven't the *capability* to become good spellers, just as some have no ear for music. Some will suggest that good spellers, like good poets, are born, not made. Waiving this point, one thing is certain : the orthographical limb of dear old King's English often gets woefully wrenched, and goes lame and limping, and begging for crutches. Hard usage indeed, as with the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and left him half dead. Some letters, spelled as you have seen, and, at seeing, have been astonished one hour. Sorry for postmasters and the postal service. Have pity, oh, my friends, on the

printers; what a time they must have of it! No marvel if those mail-bags blush blood red, and do groan, being burdened. Is the mail-wagon an ambulance or a hearse for carrying the wounded or dead? And not only in such hard usage does the King's English *receive* wrong; it *inflicts* wrong. "The letter killeth." We read of dead languages. Sometimes in reading a letter or book you wonder with a very sore amazement. A few days ago I received from a college graduate and writer of books a letter in which two words were misspelled. How many of your letters give you *February* as *Febuary*? how many, *separate* as *seperate*? And one church member complaining of another member in the "*churtch*."

Well, let us spare our censure, and say, pity and charity. A great misfortune, this we speak of—utterly a fault in any man, and especially in any person pretending to be a *lady*, and should be shunned by all manner of means. In my ancient times the spelling lesson was *studied*, column by column, from the spelling-book, and spelled by the classes, old and young alike, standing on the floor—the scholar taking his place, and keeping it if he could, the month in and out, without having his head cut off every night—a rather discouraging operation to an aspiring lad or lass. But here we come to debatable ground, and will call a halt. As to aim and achievement in this line—if the *personal* mention may be allowed. One winter

is remembered when boy kept such headship all through the term, and carried off the great prize, a punched and pendant silver ninepence, tow-string and all. Perhaps less of sliding down hill in *those* months. Or, with your farther indulgence. A noted spelling match in a neighboring town. Visitors invited to give in their names, and take part in the contest. Sides chosen. Came out *even* at 8 P.M. Another choosing up. Came out *even* again at 9. "Let us have this out." One from each side must go upon the floor, and spell for the side. Against aforesaid boy was placed an older person, Miss H. L., who had taught school four summers. Plied and pumped with the spelling-book fore and aft, and aft and fore.



“The combat deepens.” By and by the word *apropos* was put to the fairer and gentler, and she spelled it *appropos*, putting in one too many p’s, and boy, getting it right, carried off the glitter. But we will not boast of things without our measure.

And what a day that was when we stood on the hill-top of human greatness, and grappled with our first *reading*-lesson! “No man may put off the law of God;” “My joy is in his law all the day.” See that boy, in his mighty wrestlings to spell out the words! Lips moving vigorously; brow knit, book turned this way and that, to give room for the great idea to come in; his whole frame writhing, and screwed down hard and tight to the supreme task. Perhaps he will “fetch

it," perhaps not ; but will come out of the throes as an older boy did from the word *picturesque*—pronouncing it *picture-squee*. But don't you give that small boy up. There is promise for him in such an energy and bent as that.

Then a succession of easy and familiar lessons ; "The time will come, etc.;" "The dog growls and barks, etc.;" "William, tell me how many mills make a cent, etc." (Some "mills" do not make a cent at all, but lose money all the time.) *One* of these commands impressed us specially, and does still ; "Henry, hold up your head, and speak loud and plain." Herein is philosophy. All the success in General Jackson's administration—all that it had—is told in his four

words: "*I take the responsibility.*" That lad, speaking softly and parting his hair in the middle, and carrying his head one side, and himself stoopingly—another dude—has already lost half the battle of life.

Then in our spelling-book those beautiful little sonnets; The Rose, The Lamb, The Goldfinch starved in a cage; all admirably adapted to cultivate in a child, or man, the finer feelings; sensibility, sympathy, gentleness, kindness. A boy taking home to his heart those four little songlets, would never afterward rob a bird's nest, nor "needlessly set foot upon a worm," but, "having humanity, forewarned, would step aside, and let the reptile live."

But come to the *fables* and the *pictures*! Here is richness. "Of the

boy that stole apples." See that old man under the tree. Continental coat and hat; that determined attitude; arm drawn back to a fearful tenseness; 20-horse power of will in that elbow; hand gripping the stone (grass has been given up) which is to make "the young sauce-box hasten down from the tree, and beg the old man's pardon." And the moral appended, "If good words and gentle means will not reclaim the wicked," etc. Then Fable No. 2.—"The country maid and her milk-pail." Pail upset, and milk spilled, and maid, like Niobe, "voiceless in her woe":

"Ferlorner 'n a musquash ef you've took and dreened the swamp."

Don't blame her. Many a maid has made a worse ado about a smaller

mishap than that. And Fable No. 3.—“The fox and the swallow.” Fox with water under him, to drown him, flies above him to devour him, and feet tangled in weeds—most decidedly a predicament, yet declining the swallow’s aid, choosing rather to endure the present swarm, already half gorged, than be assailed by another and hungrier. And Fable 4.—That cat, covered with meal, and hanging by her feet as if dead, and thus deceiving the rats and mice to their undoing. But of all these Fables, the 8th and last hits our common life oftenest and hardest; selfishness and sense of justice getting here muddled and mixed up in ludicrous confusion on the question, Whether it is your bull that has gored my ox, or mine yours? About once a

week through his lifetime is that fable brought to recollection by what a man sees and passes through in "this poor miserable world."

Putting on the spectacles of my ancientness, I have been looking anew through the old spelling-book to see how, on the whole, the old friend would appear to me now in these latter days to which it and I have come down. Grandly, sir, is my ready answer; never before handsomer than now—I mean the book. And so will it appear to *you*, my friend, from the glance or the scrutiny, if you be the sensible man I take you for. Useful lessons on weights, measures, coins, seasons, and times; choice maxims, to guide our conduct every day; observations on domestic economy; a finely

drawn picture of rural and farm life ; just as Cowper tells us that God made the country, and man the town. Admirable collection and grouping of things, coin and currency, ready unto all good works. You observe throughout the book a high *moral* and *religious* tone and tonic, yes, a *Biblical* and *Christian* tone and teaching.

Our old spelling-book has its closing and coronation in an excellent "moral catechism," eight pages, on these themes : " Of Humility, Mercy, Peace-makers, Purity of Heart, Anger, Revenge, Justice, Generosity, Gratitude, Truth, Charity and giving of Alms, Avarice, Frugality and Economy, Industry and Cheerfulness." These, surely, are excellent things to



be learned in schools and elsewhere.  
And the earlier the better.

I said *Scriptural* and *Christian*. Our spelling-book gave us Bible maxims in Bible words. We were not frightened in those days by alarm-cries of "church and state." Nobody was wise enough to tell us that to save the land from utter rottenness and putrescence the Bible and prayer must be excluded from the public schools. We were not taught that to be good patriots we must be infidels. We were simple enough to believe that to train a tree to grace and beauty we must begin with its early growth. Our old English Reader told us that "Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined;" and we had so little sense as to believe it. We hadn't attained to the wisdom

of thinking that the best method in all education is to let the devil have the *making* of your children, and leave to you the *mending* of them as best you can. We hadn't received the new version—it isn't yet quite ready for the press—giving the translation as from the Hebrew: Train up a child in the way he should *not* go, and when he is old he will come out all right. True, there is the FAMILY, which is *fons et princeps* in all good nurture and culture. There are also the sanctuary and Sabbath-school; blessed ministries. But all these three agree in one, and are built up upon one—the Word of God. The Pilgrim and Puritan Fathers, coming to these shores, were right early in rearing the school-house, and placing the Bible in it, as

beyond comparison the best of all books. School-house and Bible in it—meeting-house, and minister, and town meeting; from thence the shepherd, the stone of Israel—our New England Israel, as it is, or was. If the Bible is not in our public schools now, as aforetime, it is because it has been put out, thrust out. But not to sermonize farther now and here.

The school-house and our old spelling-book—all hail and farewell! The closing words of the spelling-book shall be my closing here: “Q. What has Christ said concerning gloomy Christians? A. He has pronounced them hypocrites; and commanded his followers not to copy their sad countenances and disfigured faces; but even in their acts of humiliation to

anoint their heads and wash their faces. Christ intended by this, that religion does not consist in, nor require, a monkish sadness and gravity; on the other hand, he intimates that appearances of sanctity are generally the marks of hypocrisy. He expressly enjoins upon his followers marks of cheerfulness. Indeed, the only true ground of perpetual cheerfulness is a consciousness of ever having done well, and an assurance of divine favor. Finis."

REMINISCENCES OF BOYHOOD LIFE  
IN VERMONT SIXTY AND MORE  
YEARS AGO.

No place on earth like your old and early home to set you musing and mumbling. Wonderful the magic spell under which you shake off years from your shoulders, and, for a little, live your young life over again. Everything you see talks to you, and you to it. The stone, the stump, the stream, the apple-tree that hung temptingly over the school-ground fence, and laden with forbidden fruit; the spot where the old strutting "gobble turkey," seeing your red cap, gave chase, and came off second best; the spot where, in a nightmare, you saw,

crossing your path, a huge bear, with a long fence-rail in his mouth, and glaring at you ; the place of the sheep-pen, and the annual washings—giving you the shudders, in seeing and pitying ; the spot by the house-corner where, on Sabbath afternoon, September 11, 1814, you sat with brother and sister, and heard the cannon-firing in the battle of Lake Champlain—properly the closing battle in the War of 1812, so-called ; the brook and rocks where stood the bark-mill into which, a few days later, you ran, and saw shiveringly through the cracks in the mill and in your eyes those awful, horrid men, Britishers, red-coats, passing on their way home from Burlington to Canada ; the piece of road over which you led old Mr. Murray, the

blind man, and for which distinguished service he paid you munificently, making over to you and your heirs and assigns forever all his right and title (five dollars) to the school-house you were just then passing. True, the house was not palatial in size and looks, and was innocent of having so much as dreamed of such superfluities as paint and stove; and in no long time an incendiary fire made the room warmer than it had ever before been. Not a vast estate, to be sure; but it was "yourn," and, while it lasted, was of as much use to you as many another and prouder possession has been to an older but not wiser than you. Happily, before the conflagration, you had gotten from the house the best it could give—the first run of sap, so to speak.



Those high writing benches, and on them the names graven by art and man's device, and thus made illustrious for all time. But that masterpiece of tyranny and torment, those *under-benches*, narrow and cramped, where, bolt upright, and with feet dangling, the youngest America sat, or fell off—you did both by turns—it would take twenty languages to execrate adequately *this* part of that school-house's conveniences and accommodations.

And then our "school-ma'am" of that ancient time. We go back to an almost fabulous antiquity to have one more look at her—not that you yourself are so old. Miss P. H. We seem to see her now—tall, straight, stately, slim, spruce, staid, and sedate; face open, placid, bland, like Washington's;

eyes blue ; hair of hue somewhere between saffron and sulphur ; of gentle and condescending ways ; strict without sternness in discipline : “ You must go straight home, and not loiter by the way ; must take off caps and make your bow to every one passing you on the road.” Sidewalks were none—and roads themselves were rudimental and primitive. The custom or act of *whistling*, when passing people in the street, or in their presence anywhere—mark of the rustic and the boor, indicating low breeding and a low plane of life—didn’t, in that early day, set one questioning whether his home was among Fiji Islanders, or among a people having some idea of good manners, gentility, decency, decorum.

’ But returning to our school-ma’am.

We have since that early time met with teachers many and various—some very good, and some indifferently good—some wise and some otherwise. But *this* one, our own and primeval, excelled them all. She was peerless, transcendent, ineffable.

“And still you gazed, and still the wonder grew,  
That one small head could carry all she knew.”

You go back in fancy to those beginnings with the good dame, and of your own grand march of mind :

“Propt on the marsh, a dwelling now I see,  
The humble school-house of my A, B, C,  
Where well-drilled urchins, each behind his tire,  
Waited in ranks the wished command to fire ;  
Then all together, when the signal came,  
Discharged their a-b abs against the dame.”

When you are seven years of age,

the family home is changed from the North District to the East, the pleasantest in the town. Here your boyhood—its ups and downs, its day-dreams and night-visions, the mirth and the melancholy, the alternations of schooling and work. Boyhood! The apostle, in 1 Cor. xiii., speaks of only *two* life periods—the childish and the manly. But can you not conceive of a something wedged in *between*—that oddity and nondescript, *the average boy*? Have poets or painters anywhere pictured him 'farther than in roughest outline? You may as well give it up. He is a puzzle and a mystification.

But *your* boyhood, and the scenes revisited and remembered by you from over the interval of nearly sixty years.

You sit again on that boulder, and stand by the brook, now dry, or push into "the sugar works,"

"And the tree is your seat, that once lent you a shade."

The slope where you slid down hill in winter. The interminable half-mile to school. The school-house—for once on a sightly, pleasant spot, and not penuriously shoved off into some swampy or rocky corner, where the land is good for nothing else. The meeting-house hill you had to climb in going home on Sundays. The copse of wood where you searched diligently for a straight stick from which to make a broom, or a crooked one for sled-runners. The tall black cherry tree in the upland pasture,

where you heard those midgets, Edgar and Willie, explain philosophically why the gray squirrel, shot dead, didn't come down quickly—"Coz he thought he was alive." The "Sodom" (next to "Snarlsboro") to which you were sent to mill on horseback, large bag strung across, and small boy perched on top. The west meadow, peopled by a community of bumble-bees, clad in their regimentals, and affording to boydom on rainy days in haying-time a field for heroism and enterprise in breaking up their habitations. And, not least, the brick school-house at the centre, where, on a well-remembered afternoon, you, with J. W., were delivered of your first Latin translation (of *terra est rotunda*), and thereby gained an elevation from which to be



sorry for all such of mankind as were not familiar with Latin literature.

Of all the notable places in our town, the *Village Green* easily bore off the palm. Large and level, not smooth, nor adorned with shrubbery and sidewalks and sylvan shades—arbor days and village improvement societies hadn't been dreamed of. But the grand meeting-house was upon it centrally, then and since one of the costliest and goodliest in Vermont, and now, in its almost hundredth year, the town's occupancy and pride. To our young vision it was a veritable St. Peter's of Rome.

Our calendar in those early ages didn't blaze numerously with holidays. But we had notably *two* in the year, *the training days*, June and Fall, and



the coming of these was calculated with an accuracy and a definiteness unsurpassed by astronomers in their great vocation and their greatest achievements. *Two* mornings in the year, certainly, on which boys didn't need to be shaken violently out of sleep.

But the Green ! Ruled sovereignly by the geese all the year round, excepting two days, and patriotically abdicated by them on those two days, on behalf of the trainers and troopers and gingerbread stands, and for the saving of the nation. Hail Columbia ! Evidently the trainers had not been drilled at West Point, and the troopers had not graduated from a riding-school. "Light Infantry" deemed themselves a little prim in dress and

movement, but "Floodwood " jogged on miscellaneously, every one for himself, a sort of royal democracy. But we had not grown critical; and the trappings and tinsel martingales, spurs, epaulets, guns, drums, plumes, knapsacks, and canteens were quite imposing, not to say "exceeding magnificent," to young eyes.

And then the *tavern* across the way—" *hotel* " was reserved for a more advanced civilization. With us it was *tavern*, and on training days *our* tavern was by a long reach the busiest place in town; and, to say truth, threescore years, since passing, have not in this town effaced wholly the calamitous effects. But the demijohns and decanters and tumblers and toddy-sticks long ago took leave of

that house—glad riddance—and to-day, in their stead, is the Post-Office, with boxes and benches for the better use and service.

“There’s a good time coming, boys !

Wait a little longer”—wait and work.

The temperance cause, most glorious of causes, is grandly marching on, good angels helping, and is sure of the ultimate triumph. God and conscience, and truth and right and reason, and the Gospel entire, and the eternal years, are for it, and are against all those who, in *this* day of light, are doing the evil. Sure as the alternation of day and night, the day is speeding towards us when this whole business of rum-selling and its fruit and issue, the making of drunkards,

will be universally an astonishment and an hissing—the world's amazement that such a thing could ever have been. Good friends, better quit that business, if engaged in it, and that right early. There certainly is something better for a humane and manly man to be doing in this world, as preparation for the to-morrow and to-morrow before him, than to be kindling and feeding these death-fires in his fellow-men. All honor to my native town of to-day, for the good fight it has fought against the rum-fiend, and for its present stand and name as a temperance town in a temperance commonwealth.

I meant to have said a word about the *land* here. Look upon those wheat-fields. I have not seen richer

in Illinois. In comparison of the loamy and generous mould here, the soil in Massachusetts, much, if not most of it, is thin, stingy, and grudging, as if intent on solving the problem of how to get from the farmer the most in sowing, and give him back the least at reaping. "If this be treason (to Massachusetts), make the most of it."

Our visit has, of course, its pathetic side. We miss the once-familiar forms and faces. The landscape, hills, vales, meadows, streams, River Lamoille, beautiful Lake Champlain, and the Adirondacks beyond—Nature in her best attire and moods.

"Heavens! what a goodly prospect spreads around!" All these are much as of old. But of the *people*

there remain but a scanty few, scarcely more than half a dozen, who had attained to adult years when, in 1827, we left for academy and college, and regions beyond. The many have passed. We visit their graves, and let memory have scope, without putting on sackcloth, as if disappointed at finding that the prophets do not live always in this world. There is another and better. "And now abideth faith, hope, charity—these three"—a strong consolation; and, with good old Dr. Watts, we will sing again: "Let every tear be dry." Most affecting of such places are the Machpelahs of parents, brothers, sisters.

The dear old town! We could wish there were more of public spirit

and enterprise to beautify and adorn, where nature has been so lavish of her gifts. But we are not in a fault-finding humor. "With all thy faults I love thee still." It was our early home.

"The earliest tie that binds the heart,  
Will ever be the brightest, strongest,  
And though the treasured links may part,  
Their memory will linger longest."

Here we were born, and, we hope, were born again. Here, and especially in that inner sanctuary, holiest of all, the *family household*, were vouchsafed us those plastic influences which, more than all things upon us since, have molded us to what we are, and have been and done, for better or for worse.

*A Christian family*—the thousand



and one accidents and incidents—  
God lifting up the fallen sparrow—the  
cares and toils, the loves and longings,  
the partings and the welcomes home,  
the Bible-reading and Sabbath-keep-  
ing, the old bass-viol, the singings  
often, and the praying alway; and  
now, how the fond recollections are all  
the more an enchantment and a power  
upon us for the years and changes  
that have come and gone,

“As streams their channels deeper wear.”

I close these jottings with a stanza  
from a sweet hymn composed by my  
Yale classmate, Coxe, late Lieutenant-  
Governor of Maryland:

“How such holy memories cluster,  
Like the stars when storms are past;  
Pointing up to that far heaven  
We may hope to gain at last.”

LETTER READ AT THE ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AMHERST, MASS.

THE authorities here bid me use the utmost freedom in personal reminiscences. The egotism involved must be borne with.

Well remember my first journey hither, specially the ride from Palmer ; the muddy roads, the shell and shackle of a coach, with more than a mild flavor of antiquity about it ; harness giving out three times before we reached Belchertown ; our Jonathan of a driver well equipped with straps and strings against contingencies. No "Sheridan's Ride" that. Called, as by

direction, on Edward Dickinson, Esq., then occupying the east part of General Mack's house. After tea with him, a Mr. Luke Sweetser came with lantern, and led me up through a piece of woods to his house among the trees. Sabbath morning, and a nervous headache. Asked Rev. Mr. Spofford to sit with me, and offer the long prayer. And what did he pray for? *One* thing, certainly: "that in the question and trial now before us, thy young servant and this people may be guided by the wisdom from above, and be led to such a conclusion as will be for the glory of God, and the best interests of his kingdom." Good man, this Mr. Spofford; I forgave him, and forgive now. But oh! and alas! to be strung up like that to begin with!

Got through that day and evening somehow. The next morning, the church and parish committees met at the office of Edward Dickinson, Esq. I was asked to be present. They had in some way rightly learned that in coming I had in mind to stay but two Sabbaths at most. Against this they strongly protested. My own mind was unalterably fixed. *Candidating!* Whereunto shall I liken it? Behold and consider a fish caught with a hook, and hung up by the gills. To think of it: a man standing in a pulpit before a people all eyes and ears, eagerly intent on learning what manner of man this is, and himself, if it be so with him, saying, impliedly: "Won't you, beloved, take me for your minister? Do, please." Well, some

persons, strung and tuned humanly, can do some things which others cannot. A public sentiment just now is worthily asking that our executions for murder be by electricity, and so be as short and painless as possible. The letter to me said, "*Supply*;" and I had come with thoughts as far from candidating as I could be, and yet be here.

After nearly a two hours' talk, it was decided that I should remain and preach on the following Sabbath, and that, in the meantime, I should call on the families of the parish—the committees taking turns in leading me about. Of that week's work Esquire Dickinson was said to have said: "That Colton is a marvel of a man—to visit two hundred families in one week, and tire

out seven committee-men, and pat every woman's baby."

The two Sabbaths I have now spoken of were the first and second in March, 1840. The call came in due time. June 10th following was appointed for my ordination.

I here reach a point in personal experience memorable indeed to me. I had come to Amherst, was counseled to come by the Andover Seminary faculty; came to a large church and parish, to a people intimately connected with a chief New England college, of which I had not been a member; came from long and close seclusion of student life, to new scenes, cares, toils, burdens. Could I prove equal to the demands? Many, my best friends, were in doubt of me.

Wouldn't it have been better to begin with a less exacting charge?

Tuesday, June 9. Came from Boston with my preacher, Rev. Wm. M. Rogers of that city. Council waiting for us at the house of Mr. Gideon Delano, in Amity Street. Council organized at 2 P.M., with President Humphrey as moderator. Documents presented and approved. Then the march to the church—moderator and candidate arm in arm, and followed by a large company, representatives of the churches. Something of *form*, if not of comeliness, in the times of old. Large gathering in the church. Stood nearly two hours for examination. Whether I stood the examination itself, I do not say. Coming out of the church after that



ordeal, I was met at the door by a Mr. Clark Green, asking me to come to his house on the evening of the next day (ordination day) and marry his daughter. Well, well, didn't this mean business and binding?

Ordination day, Wednesday, June 10. Charming day. Great number of friends from down the river. Church filled. The *Hampshire Gazette* of the following Tuesday said: "All the parts were listened to with very unusual interest. The sermon was masterly in matter and manner. Dr. Humphrey, giving charge to the people, said: 'When your pastor comes, receive him wherever you may be. Disturb no dust, make no apologies. Do not spend the first half of the visit in complaining because he doesn't

come oftener, and the last half because it is so short; but make his visit so pleasant that he *can't* stay away.'"

Thus the great day and occasion—great to me. At evening twilight I was on my way to the wedding in Mill Valley. Met Judge Dickinson in the road opposite the president's house. Saw at once from his dress and unshaven face that he had not attended my ordination. Was it come to this at my beginnings here? Deacon in the church, college educated, one of the wealthiest in the town. But no matter now for the reasons, if I ever knew them, of this holding back.—Enough my grateful testimony, that Judge Dickinson became, in no long time, and continued to the last to be, one of my best friends and helpers.

Leaving the wedding party, I returned to the Amherst House, to my room, south front, directly over the office. But there was no sleep for me that night, nor lying down. *Two such days*, with their draughts on nature, the exactions and exhaustions. The strain was nigh to breaking. Once in the night I said to myself, "This is all a dream, and I shall wake, and be relieved." But, the curtain turned aside, and the full moon shining brightly, and down there in plain sight were the signs on offices and stores. "This certainly is no dream." Then a more than half purpose to leave Amherst before morning. Knew and said, "There will be a noise over this. Strange freak, man called and settled, and ran away the first night."

But then there were five reasons which might satisfy my friends—chiefly this, that I had been unwisely counseled to come here, instead of taking one of the lighter charges that had been offered me. Then there were thoughts of dark and desperate expedients. Blessed thing, that morning follows night. But *that* morning brought no relief to me. At 10 o'clock Mr. J. S. Adams called. Saw I was cast down. His gentleness of voice and ways, some of you can remember. But there was as yet no easement. Providential that the weekly church prayer-meeting came that (Thursday) afternoon. Large attendance at the church. Took my place behind the communion table, invoked a blessing, read a brief Scripture, then said, I had always

thought that, in assuming a pastoral charge, one took upon himself a great burden, but I never *felt* it as I did now. I was not able to speak further. Deacon Mack quickly rose and said: "Oh! our pastor mustn't think so; the burden is *mutual*; it is on us all as well as on him, and we all, pastor and people, will help each other all we can. And, best of all, God will help us, and we shall be stayed up."

Then he prayed for "Our Pastor;" and another prayed, and another. The meeting closed. On my way to my room, at a spot between the homes of Professor Fowler and Mrs. Moore, the terrible load rolled off suddenly and wholly, and if I ever went to my knees and thanked God for a great deliverance, I did so then. I have seen

something of care and toil and pain, but such a horror of great darkness has so far been but *once* upon me, and I hope and pray that the same, or like of it, may not come on me again.

Perhaps I am wrong in saying all this here and now. If so, it can be forgiven me. I have never before spoken it in public, excepting once, and in part—in giving the right hand to a young brother assuming a similar charge.

A year or two before I came here, the parish had voted that the pastor, Mr. Bent, receiving presents from non-parish members of the congregation, should account for the same to the parish. I had been here but a few weeks, when a handsome traveling valise was sent me. I well divined

it was a *tester*—to see what the new man would do about it. I returned the gift, and with it as pleasant a letter as I knew how to write ; thanking the donor for his kindness, and adding, that I could not give to the parish the present he had sent to me, and that it would not do for me to break a parish rule. To the first meeting of parish thereafter I sent word that the rule was embarrassing me in my parish visitation. The rule was rescinded, and then the men who had signed off returned to their place and part, and so that ripple sank from view.

Perhaps some of the ancients here can call to recollection the old pulpit in our meeting-house in 1840. Of pine wood, narrow, doored, and ach-



ingly plain. Man up there had to look well to his elbows in essaying a gesture. High, and closed against all assaults; but so were the old Bastile towers in which prisoners were immured.

In 1842 or '43 the parish obtained from Boston a new pulpit—the same now in the house—a costly and very comely affair for those times. Then there were other fixings and furnishings. Then the grounds around the church must be graded and put in shape—a labor of days and many hands. You might have seen Lawyer Osmyn Baker, coat off, and axe in hand, pleading three hours in masterful logic for the ejectment of a stump from its ancient tenure and holding on domain of the said church aforesaid.

There was admirable enterprise. The people had a mind to work.

I am not able to boast that, in coming here, I found a church and parish weak, and, in leaving, left them strong. They were strong from the first of my knowing them, or knowing of them. Perhaps the parish has never since been stronger as to number, character, wealth, and standing of chief men. To show this to one whose memory can stretch itself to the men and things here fifty years ago, one has only to speak some of the names then found here. Deacons, Eleazar Gaylord, John Leland, John Dickinson, David Mack, and Isaac Hawley; lawyers, Edward Dickinson, Osmyn Baker, Lucius Boltwood, and, a little later, Charles Delano and Samuel T.

Spaulding; doctors, Sellon, Gridley, Dorrance, and Cutler; merchants, Mack & Son, James Kellogg & Son, Sweetser & Cutler, Pitkin & Kellogg and Holland; reverends, Sanford and Spofford; teacher, Nahum Gale, of the academy; editor, J. R. Trumbull; Mr. Green and Joseph Sweetser, of the Amherst Bank; Messrs. Fiske Cutler, Andrew Wilson, Thomas Jones, J. S. and C. Adams, S. C. Carter, Simeon Clark, Newton Fitch, Linus Green, Aaron Belden, Horace Smith, Martin Kellogg, Chester Kellogg, Seth Nims, Postmaster Strong, the Smiths, Bakers, Boltwoods, Kelloggs, Dexters, and Williamses of Mill Valley; the Cowles, Hawleys, and Nashes, of Plainville; and the names Cowles, Angier, Bangs, Ayres, Eastman, and

Dickinson of the North Roads ; these and more—for I draw from memory, and must stop somewhere.

Surely a field, this, to call for and call out the best and most that any minister could have and give.

As to those my deacons, specially the first four ; venerable men in form and aspect, all verging toward seventy years of age, crowned with hoary heads—men of affairs, and wise in counsel. Happily for us, we didn't then turn off our deacons every year or two—a practice I never believed in, and never shall.

Don't you, now, be too hard on a young minister, if, unawares, there sometimes stole into his heart a timorous fragrance, just a bit of sly elation at seeing those venerable

forms, his deacons, pass round with the bread and wine in the communion hour and service. We are human still—some of us are—having, I hope, a little of grace with our much of nature.

It was a point of trial in those days, that this church and parish had no parsonage, no chapel, nor vestry. Our evening meetings were held in the Academy building, then in care of a student, aided and aiding himself in preparation for the ministry—the late Rev. Dr. Isaac Bliss of Constantinople. Happily for pastor and people, and in the behoof of all that is fair and right, those aching voids here have been filled, to the joy and praise of many.

And then, as to the old meeting-

house on the hill, whither the tribes went up. Homely in outward looks, doubtless, but handsome within—so we felt. The Lord was there in the beauty of his holiness; and his presence will make any place beautiful. As for the rest, I, for one, was never kept awake o' nights. Rowland Hill once said: "Never mind for the hive; give us the bees." I give joy to my successors, my brethren beloved, that they have the hive, and the bees, and the handsomeness all through and around.

In those times of old there were here a few spots a little steep and rough in a minister's work. One was his having to preach two sermons on Fast Days. Another was his having to preach two sermons on Communion

Days, administer the sacrament at noon, and—a last straw—attend a prayer-meeting in the evening. And the tired toiler betook himself, as best he could, to the soothing persuasion, “Mollifying Ointment,” that he was obeying the apostle’s injunctions: “Make FULL proof of your ministry,” and “Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” Once the suggestion was made by some one to have the Communion Service occupy the afternoon. But there was opposition to this, and the matter was dropped. It was the “custom” here, and in some places hereabouts, and custom, you know, is law, and law is law, and what is not law is something else.

“Innocuous desuetude” had not arrived in these parts. A somewhat



of the strict and rigid, you will say, in these things of the olden time. Perhaps so ; but possibly the pendulum is now swinging to the other and not better extreme.

It is not my part to-day to give the history of this church. Another will do this. But I may, I think, and should, refer in a word to the *Revivals* here in 1841, '45, and '50. This last was a work of marked depth and power. The incidents and influences leading to it are quite instructive. Early in January of this year (1850), the prayer-meetings were notably fuller and more solemn. A cloud of mercy seemed to hang over us, and ready to drop down fatness. Days and weeks passed, but no conversions. What was the hinderance? Once and

again the church standing committee—the deacons—met in the pastor's study to talk and pray over this question. Oppressing fear was felt, lest our dawn should shut down in darkness. The trouble, we came at length to believe, was in the rum places in the village, with fires of hell in full blast. What could be done? My counselors did wisely in advising prudence, for we were told the rum men were desperate. Kind words had been used, but availed nothing. You can imagine a pastor's anxieties in such an emergency. March Town meeting was close by. I drew up two articles, and obtained five signatures, asking for their insertion in the warrant: First, to see if it be the wish of the town of Amherst that places be kept open here for the sale of intoxi-

cating drinks, in violation of law ; and, second, to see if the town will authorize and instruct their selectmen to close such places, if such there be in the town. (I quote from memory and for substance.) I went to Lieutenant Dickinson of the South Parish, and Judge Conkey of the East, and Daniel Dickinson of the North, and President Hitchcock of the college. They all promised to give a helping word—Dr. Hitchcock to speak last. The meeting came. Sweetser's hall was crowded to the stairs. There was much excitement. A man from South Amherst moved that the articles be dismissed. This was voted down. Then the main question, and now the speaking as pre-arranged—Dr. Hitchcock closing—and a more affecting and effective

appeal than his I have never heard. He said in substance: "The people of Amherst are aware that I have not been in the habit of meddling in the affairs of the town. I feel that the interests of myself and my family are safe in the care of the town, and I am confident that the good people here, who have done so nobly for the college, will not allow the institution to suffer injuries from evil causes among us;" and then, with an emphasis that fairly choked his utterance, he added: "*But it were better that the college should go down, than that young men should come here to be ruined by drink places among us.*" Then the voting—four hundred hands shot up for abating the nuisances—so it was said. Contrary minds—just *one* hand, and one only

and alone. The next morning at ten o'clock the selectmen went to those rum resorts, and shut them up.

Then the heavens gave rain—blessed showers—and there was a great refreshing. That revival work continued till late in summer. More than one hundred and fifty professed hope in Christ; sixty-eight persons joined this church, on profession, on one day—August 11. Others came later; some joined elsewhere.

I cannot let this opportunity pass, without expressing my very great obligations to the faculty of Amherst College for their unvarying courtesy and kindness to me from first to last of my labors here. Fathers and brothers could not have been more friendly and helpful. One member of the faculty,

Professor William S. Tyler, revered and beloved, is still spared to us ; and my best impulses prompt me to say, that a kinder heart than his I have never found.

It has providentially been my favored lot to minister to two peoples, and only two, in the Gospel of Christ. They were and are good peoples. I never desired any better peoples. I never sought nor desired any other peoples. These have I loved, and I love them still. If any one be curious to ask which of my two peoples I love most and best, my instant answer is—*both.*

REMARKS MADE AT THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
FOUNDING OF THE HAMPSHIRE  
GAZETTE.

I HAVE known personally most if not all of the editors of the *Hampshire Gazette* and *Gazette and Courier* for the last forty-six years. On June 10, 1840, I was introduced to Mr. Wm. A. Hawley, then editor and proprietor of the paper. I knew him afterward somewhat familiarly. A charming man ; gentle, genial, the very soul of pleasantness ; of sensibilities tender as a woman's. That sparkling eye and sweet smile of his—to have seen them once is to remember them forever. Too soon for us did the fell destroyer, consumption, pluck that flower.



With Mr. Thomas Hale my acquaintance was slight. In January, 1858, I read to him some jottings of mine, entitled "The Old White Meeting-House," which were kindly accepted by him, and printed in the *Gazette* of that month.

Mr. J. R. Trumbull was for some time a member of my Amherst congregation. I have kept track of him in years since—have seen him worked, and worn, and wasted, physically, to a thinness too tenuous to cast a shadow. A very able and acceptable service to the public has been rendered by him; and for that service, and for his intrinsic worthiness, this city, by her suffrages, is doing him deserved honor. Long live Mr. Trumbull!

Then the *Northampton Courier*, be-

fore its merging in the *Gazette*—not a mustard-pot falling into a milk-pan—for neither paper was mustard nor milk, but meat for strong men. Mr. A. W. Thayer—ardent, open, frank-spoken, carrying his whole soul in his face. I see him walking—those infirm, unsteady, straggling steps, almost as if about to surrender him to the floor or pavement. A pleasant man. I thank him to-day for his hand-shaking, and for his kind, encouraging word spoken to me as I came down from the infinite altitude of the Old Church pulpit, as that pulpit was forty-five years ago. That word didn't harm the young preacher—it did him good—it braced his resolution to try again.

Mr. Lewis Ferry, another of the worthy editors, was of my Easthamp-

ton parish. I attended him in his decline and death.

And now our generous friend and host, Mr. Henry S. Gere. I cannot tell how many years the Northampton press or presses and peoples have had his toils. Veteran editor ; and veteran SOLDIER also, content with having served his country as best he could in her supreme peril, and not vilely casting away his shield of honor afterward by asking for a pension. In stature proudly eminent ; yet stoops a little, not from age or aches, certainly not from fear of anybody, but, I ween, from work and overwork ; patiently plodding at his task the year in and out, to serve and please and profit a host of intelligent readers, who look to him and his work as a sort of oracle with-

in his line and sphere. Plains and valleys, village and villa, mountains and all hills, echoing with carrier bell-call ; and such ready response in opening door and gate to bring in our old, familiar and ever-welcome friend, the *Hampshire Gazette*.

Now, these men of the *Gazette* from first till this present ; men good and brave—always on the side of the true and right—ready unto all good works—leading men, resolutely and worthily serving in town, church, parish, and school affairs, as well as in their more strictly professional sphere. Tribute to whom tribute is due. If I make any exception to this good rule, it shall be in the case of Mr. Gere, who stole one of the choicest of my Easthampton flock a little while before my as-

suming the charge there. For that I never thanked him, and I never will.

And now, turning, if I may, for a moment, from the *men* of the *Gazette*, to their calling and work. It is quite observable, how many the points in which two of the leading professions are much at one. The editor and the minister. The press and the pulpit. The paper and the sermon. Sunday forenoon and Tuesday afternoon. Both callings are honorable. Both are powers among a people. Think of 14,000 newspapers and periodicals, sending forth two and a half billion copies as annual aggregate circulation in this our land. And think of single presses that can strike off 24,000 copies an hour. What a mighty enginery is here! Seest thou a man

defying the press? Mark him. He is already upon the ragged edge of desperation.

Both callings are conservators of good ; are patrons of industry, order, good taste, morals, and manners ; of virtue, knowledge, temperance, godliness—are indeed indispensable to a republican and Christian civilization. Instance the *Gazette's* staunch advocacy of the *Temperance* cause week by week. And the *Springfield Republican* in its splendid fight against the rum-demons—Grog and Magrog, devouring locusts ; “and they have tails like unto scorpions, and there are stings in their tails ; and their power is to hurt men. And they have a king over them, who is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the He-

brew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue he hath his name Apollyon." All honor to the *Gazette* and the *Republican* for their noble fight against this curse of curses. So of our presses at large; with all their faults, they are still a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well.

Both callings, the editorial and clerical, demand a good equipment of talents and culture—must interest all classes—must be educators and refiners of public sentiment—must reprove and rebuke—must have a voice of gladness and a smile for everybody, and some others—must have their own convictions, and the courage of them—must be fair and unbiased, without partiality or prejudice—must



not take sides in controversies and quarrels—must be on *our* side in any event, and every time.

Both places will have plenty of counsel how to do your work, and plenty of criticism of that work when you have done it the best you could. Both places involve an inexorable *constancy* of exacting toil. Sunday will come, and Tuesday will come, and must be prepared for. That tired worker, almost collapsed and caved in as he is on Sunday evening, or Tuesday evening, is already, quite likely, boosting himself up to think out a something seasonable and good for the next issue of sermon or paper. That constant, patient, plodding, persistent toil—such tax and levy upon brain and nerve, with scarcely so much as a let-

up and release once a year to go a-fishing. Why, even our fevers are mostly intermittent, and our present and popular malaria deals a little more gently with us every other day.

In *one* particular, men of the cloth have, perhaps, an advantage over men of the quill and scissors. Look at that editor at the foot of one of those Hills Difficulty, which he has to get over or get around. I see him sitting in his *uneasy* chair, with clinched teeth and knit brow, pestered, puzzled, perplexed, in sore quandary what to do with that communication which some one of us, aspiring wights, has sent in. To print, or not to print; to make *one* mad, and stop his paper, or to set *many* wondering what in the world the editor could have been thinking of, to put

*that* into his paper. And specially the *poetry*, wedding and otherwise—here's the rub. Some good, some very good, if you please, and *some*—well, perhaps, not equaling Bryant's or Longfellow's, but giving a certain jingle; and so do brass bells on a mule, dragging a pung through sleet and slush. Not that we, the sometime scribblers for the press, are mules; not by a long way. We fling back the insinuation. But gently and softly here, lest you throw frost upon that blossoming or budding nondescript ineffable something, named GENIUS.

What manner of man, then, the editor or minister must be!—a very bundle and jumble of incompatibilities and impossibilities rolled together, and rounded into a human personality!

On this anniversary occasion we tender our hearty congratulations to Mr. Gere on his place and position as to-day the editor and proprietor of his and our *Hampshire Gazette*—a paper counting and crowning to-day its Hundred Years of honorable history, and giving promise of an equally honorable career for a hundred years to come.

A LEAF OR TWO FROM MY NOTES OF  
TRAVEL FORTY YEARS AGO.

APRIL 28, 1846.—Left Fredericksburg, Va., at 6 A.M., by steamer *Planter*, down the Rappahannock; Baltimore, Md., at 6 A.M., April 29. Hotel on Light Street. After breakfast, went to Mr. Rowe's, on Green Street. Had talk with Rev. Mr. Snow, a boarder there—Mr. S., once minister in Whately, and afterwards in South Hadley Falls. Obtained from him a note to Mr. Johnson, Warden of Maryland Penitentiary—this note to open the way for me to see Rev. Charles T. Torrey, a prisoner there. The warden a polite and obliging official. Mr. Torrey dying of

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consumption. The physician was on the ground, and readily consented to my going in. But first I must open the box (large, square, paper box) containing the shroud in which Mr. Torrey was to be laid out. I carried this to the prison at the request of Mr. Snow, as it was thought that Mr. T. might not live a day longer. Left my charge, after opening it, in care of warden. Went with him through several massive doors, and up two flights of stairs. Entered at last a long room, evidently designed for the sick, there being a succession of iron pallets or cots, two feet high from the floor, and each separated from its neighbor by hanging screens. Each room very narrow. Passed several of these before I came to Mr. Torrey's. Recog-



nized him instantly. Same fine face and expression—intelligence—refinement—decision; always beautiful, but never more so than now. Peculiar expression of eyes, which were consumptively bright. Warden asked him if he remembered me. T. said he did. We were in Yale College together. I had last seen him at Andover Seminary, on a visit of his there in '36. He had studied theology there, and was at that time pastor in Providence, R. I. Torrey said he was glad to see me. Held me steadily by the hand. I alluded to his feeble bodily condition, and said I hoped it was better with his soul. He smiled and said, "Oh! yes." I asked him if he suffered pain. He replied, "No, but little." I spoke of Judge Dickinson



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and Lucius Boltwood, Esq., noted abolitionists, my parishioners in Amherst. He smiled, and said, "I remember them well; they were good friends." He added, "There is another good friend in Amherst, a Dr."—he hesitated, his brow showing effort to recall the name. I said, "Dr. Gardner Dorrance." His countenance lighted up as he quickly replied, "Yes, yes, that is the one." I spoke of Dr. D. as a man of large frame, and of a soul *as* large. He smiled almost to a laugh, and said, with great energy, "*Larger!*" I spoke of the probability of his being near his end. After a moment he replied, with great emotion, his chin quivering as he answered, "Yes." I said I hoped he was happy in the prospect of the

release here, and of the joy beyond. He said, "Yes, I am." I said I hoped he recognized in all he was passing through the all-wise and good ordering of Him who chastens whom He loves, and makes all things work together for their good. He replied, "I think I do." I said, "If we are children of God, then all is well." He replied with energy, "Yes, indeed." He requested me to pray with him. I did so, kneeling by his cot—the warden uncovering, and sitting still at the foot of the cot. Once, in the prayer, Torrey gave an audible response. It was when I prayed that Christ, the sympathizing Friend and Saviour, would manifest himself to him in his loveliness and glory. After prayer, I said I was afraid I had stayed too long. He

answered, "Oh, no!" Said he was "very glad I had called"—smiling the while, and still holding me by the hand. As we bade each other good-by he seemed to be struggling with emotions that didn't find utterance.

Torrey's room was well lighted and aired. His face and hands were clean and white. His shirt was very coarse unbleached linen—prison cloth. Bed-clothes otherwise not particularly noticeable. A man—looking like a prisoner — was in the room, mixing medicines. The warden came with me to the outer gate, and, giving me his hand, said, with evident emotion, "I do wish he were away from here." A man in Mr. Torrey's condition, yet so calm and resigned, no word of complaint—and such recognition of God's

good hand as all in all. Leaving the prison, I went to the top of Washington (Baltimore) Monument, and jotted down as accurately as I could the words and incidents of the prison interview. Had indescribable emotions. Abhorred slavery. I had a few days before seen, from the dome of the Capitol in Washington, a gang of slaves, chained or tied together, and, under an overseer, whip in hand, going, "like dumb, driven cattle," to their daily task. And all this in a land boasting of freedom and equal rights! I had, five years before this, preached at King George Court-house, Va. My brother took the precaution to look my sermon over carefully before I went into the pulpit—(the judge's bench, in a court-house)—to see if there was in

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it anything fatefully anti-slavery; he very kindly wishing to ward off from me any likelihood of lynching, and myself also having no special desire for that sort of thing.

Well, well, the times have changed, and we've changed in them. The spot and region of that court-house have since been overrun, burnt, and blackened by both armies, the Confederate and the Federal, and have for a time since been little better than a howling waste. And slavery itself, abhorred of God and man, has been swept from there, and from the land—torn up and rooted out by the very means adopted and pursued by the South to spread and perpetuate the curse upon the nation, North and South together.

“There’s a Divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough-hew them how we will.”

I should here add a word or two respecting Mr. Torrey. He died two or three days, I think, after my visit with him. I was told at the time, that his friends from Massachusetts petitioned Governor Pratt to allow Mr. Torrey to be carried to a neighboring house, and die there, and not within prison walls. This, within a week of his death, and after the physician had said that recovery was wholly out of the question. The governor’s reply, as reported, was : “If it was a case of murder, I would, but as it is, I will not ; this running slaves away has got to be stopped.”

As to Mr. Torrey’s “crime :” I do not know the reasons of his going to

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reside in Baltimore. I have never seen evidence that he went there with the intention of assisting slaves to escape from their thralldom. Two slaves, already miles on their way of escape, found him in the city, and asked his aid. Obeying an impulse, springing up from his long-cherished hatred of slavery, he took the two men into a wagon, and carried them ten miles on the way to Pennsylvania and freedom ; and they, naturally thinking that a man is himself, and that his legs are his own, unpopular as the doctrine has been, somehow found themselves pushing toward the North Star. This was the whole head and front of Mr. Torrey's offending. Nothing more or else was charged against him. For this he must languish and die within prison walls.



Mr. Torrey was buried in Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Mass. A granite column marks his resting-place in a beautiful dell not far from the entrance gate. A profile of him, cut in stone, is at the head of the column. The figure of a slave is at the base, his face turned up toward the face of his deliverer, his arms also, and from them are chains falling to the ground.

Often as I am able, I go to that beautiful cemetery—I know of no other the equal of it on the whole, though I have been in many of the best—and doing so, I never fail to visit, first and dearest to me, the grave of my martyr friend, Rev. Charles T. Torrey.

I may add, that Mr. Torrey's wife

was Mary, daughter of Rev. Dr. Ide, of Medway, Mass. She was a highly cultivated lady, and survived him a few years, a deep mourner over his cruel taking off.

A. M. C.

EASTHAMPTON, *March 1*, 1887.

A FEW TOUCHES, IMPRESSIONS, AND  
RECOLLECTIONS LESS OR MORE  
ACCURATE, CONCERNING THE  
MINISTERS OF THE EDWARDS  
CHURCH AND PARISH IN NORTH-  
AMPTON.

REV. JOHN TODD, D.D. He was himself, and not another, and not much like any other. It would be difficult to conceive of two John Todds as inhabiting simultaneously this mundane sphere. Of large frame—loose-jointed, not so closely knit and compact as some. Strong and stalwart. Face with great protruding ridges—and mountains imply valleys. Lips prominent and compressed—as much as to say, “This thing has got to *go*,

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anyway." Hair bristling and stiff—perpendicular, horizontal—every way except downwards. His head, in its whole contour, looking not a little like the Charter Oak, with its branches scraggy and defiant. And yet a handsome man, if handsome *is* that handsome *does*. The nuts of roughest bark are apt to be of sweetest meat. Get within. *Mind*, like a Corliss steam-engine—and moving any number of wheels. Of multifarious reading, and for such reading an appetite omnivorous, insatiable, devouring every green thing, and digesting and assimilating the same; and so, in no long time, out it came, foliage, flower, fruit, some truth graven ineffaceably upon your memory and heart. As to his will and purposes,

reminding one of what John Foster ascribes to John Howard—all Johns—"an untamable efficacy of soul." And an affectionate nature withal, loving, as he did, every good body and thine, with his *might*, and loving unto the end. Of a many-sided nature—not equilateral, not rounded out to fullness in all its parts, but more complete in some parts than others—and where on earth is the perfect man? I know not any. In simplicity a child; was taken in, cheated many a time, by the sharper than he. Not skilled in the arts of diplomacy or finesse. He was artless as any child. He hadn't the training nor the instinct to untwist all the small knots in a Yankee's head. He hadn't, as some have, the keen, quick sense to

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discover, nor the care to know, all the hidden springs of human action. He took men as he found them, not burrowing in the dirt, but above ground. He was not a trapper nor snarer. He shot birds flying. He took the fox on the foot. He caught the fish as it came along. He was like Nimrod, a mighty hunter; and he was a fisher as well—a fisher of men. And what a prodigious *worker*! exemplifying, in his own life and labors, what I remember to have read in his *Student's Manual*, more than forty years ago, viz., that you cannot have too many irons in the fire at once—put in shovel, tongs, poker, everything. “Well, John,” said his college and seminary classmate, as they came out of the chapel of Andover Seminary,

at the close of the graduating exercises—"Well, John, what now are you going to do in the world?" The answer came instantly, "I am going to make a noise." And he *has* made it, and the sounds are prolonged, and will never die. To-day his works are read in a score of languages. Portions of his writings were found among the effects of Sir John Franklin in the Arctic seas. A great and good man—a *rare* man—take him for all and all. Oh, for a thousand like him, to bless the church and the world!

The next minister was the Rev. John Mitchell. I knew a something of him. I met him in one or two of the associational meetings, before the association was divided. He was the acknowledged oracle and authority

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with the old Hampshire Association on all questions of church rule and government. Of infirm health—pale—bland and pleasant expression of face. Stooped a little in walking—kept his eyes on the ground, as if in deep study, as he probably was. Was a clear thinker—carried his thoughts to conclusions, convictions, principles. Carried a level and cool head. Was quite conservative in his opinions of men and matters. Wouldn't have done much as a radical reformer—had more of caution than of push and daring. Was, I think, a better writer than speaker. Hadn't the physical force to throw out adequately what was upon the carefully written pages before him. A very instructive preacher he certainly must have been.

An excellent counselor. A true man. A sincere Christian—holding the faith in a good conscience. A faithful minister—a bishop blameless. He sowed good seed here, and the reapers will be gathering in the harvest of it in long years yet to be. Judge nothing before the time. “Stillest streams oft water fairest meadows, and the bird that flutters least is longest on the wing.”

And now the next pastor, Rev. E. P. Rogers, D.D., as different from the last as could well be imagined. Bright-hearted, healthy, hale, and well met. Handsome in form, face, features. Of easy and graceful manners. Ready in speech. Had on his lips a pleasant word for every passer-by. Knew everybody, man, woman, child

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—knew them by name, and called them all by their names. Never passed people in the street without noticing them. Was never caught looking on the sidewalk, and wrapped in brown study—never that. He would have made a poor monk, to wear a cowl, and be silent and sullen. He would quickly drive the moths and spiders from that cell. “The stones would cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber would answer it.” Think of Brother Rogers as thrust into an inner prison at midnight. He would *sing* those prison-doors open, as Paul and Silas did. He is a child of the light and of the day—a good man and a good friend to meet anywhere. He could throw a salutation to you fifty rods with the

utmost grace and ease. He was the cheerfulest of shepherds—a quality too rare, but a *power*—specially with *children*, who love cheerful folks. It was a good change from Mr. Mitchell, who in his way was perhaps just as good. Parishes, like other peoples, incline to contrasts and opposites. It is well, else they would get their ways into those *ruts* which are a hinderance to good wagoning, as wagoning is in this world. In one respect, Brother Rogers surpassed any preacher I have ever known—viz., in his easy and fluent use of a manuscript—reading as if he didn't read—catching the words by glances so quick as to leave you in doubt whether he takes his eyes off you at all. And he has, in admirable degree, that quick and off-

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hand readiness in all his mind and manners. Bright-minded; cup full and running over of the oil of gladness. He lives on the south side of the house. Coming from Amherst, and meeting him on the corner of Bridge and Market Streets, at a time, many years ago, when incendiary fires were here almost every other night, I said, "Brother Rogers, what in the world are you coming to here in Northampton?" Quick as a flash was the answer, "Coming to ashes, as fast as possible." Having served several churches, North and South, in the good work, Dr. Rogers is now, and has been for a goodly number of years, the accepted and beloved pastor of a large and influential Dutch Reformed Church on Fifth Avenue, New York.

And late be the day of his translation !

Then came a pastor of still another pattern—Rev. George E. Day, D.D. A still and quiet man—scholarly, and much addicted to books. Blameless and harmless, a son of God, without rebuke. Loving his people, and loved by them all. An able preacher, bringing beaten oil into the sanctuary—sermons that had cost him many hours of patient study. You never had from him a crude address. It would have been to him as the breaking of his bones to find himself closing a clumsy or an awkward sentence. Everything must have the finishing touch. He was not, like General Taylor, “Rough and Ready.” He must have *time* for perfecting his works. He wouldn’t

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have made a great Methodist—and that people are of the best. He wasn't as well fitted as some for roughing it in out-door work. I think of him as carefully searching out the usages and meanings of the Greek particles and the Hebrew vowel-points. The marvel to me is, how, with his studious turn, and his fondness for the library and its attractions, he could have served this people so long, so ably, so efficiently, and so acceptably, in the practical and every-day duty and work of a Christian minister.

A good work he did here, and a good name he has left here, and the remembrance of him is fondly cherished in loving hearts. Enemies he had none; he couldn't have; it wasn't in him to make enemies. He is one



of the gentlest—one of the Johns—a disciple whom Jesus loves. And having done his work well and worthily among you, whereof you are witnesses, he is now serving the Master with equal ability and acceptableness in another sphere of Christian labor—as professor in Yale Theological Seminary.

Well, we have come down in the succession from Adam to Enoch—walking with God, but not translated—not yet. I don't care for the *number* in the succession, whether seventh or fifth from Adam. I was thinking how *good* a man Enoch was—*that* was all.

Rev. Gordon Hall, D.D. I shall not say many things concerning him, to his face—things I *would* say if I might, consistently with sparing his

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modesty and blushes. I have a score against him, which I wish were cleared off; and I may as well take the sweet revenge now. In giving me the charge at my installation in Easthampton, twenty-four years ago last March—both of us standing in the pulpit—Mr. Hall looked at me over his spectacles with his sharp eyes, and as he spoke, moved his head somewhat thus—. My little daughter in the front pew down there went to weeping. When asked, on arriving at home, what she cried for, she replied: "Because Mr. Hall was scolding at father." I can forgive Brother Hall that one offense. It isn't in him to be inflicting wounds on anybody—not if he can help it. A thorough scholar—Valedictorian of his class at Yale Col-

lege, and subsequently a tutor there—a graduate from Yale Theological Seminary, and for some years pastor of the church in Wilton, Conn.—the native home of Professor Moses Stuart, of eminent fame—Mr. Hall came here thoroughly furnished unto all good works—prepared to bring forth, out of the treasures of God's Word, not things old and old, but "things new and old." And thus, for a quarter of a century, as a good shepherd, he has been feeding this flock of God—feeding you with knowledge and understanding. And not *feeding* merely, but watching over you in the Lord—a grand, good pastor, teacher, counselor, guide, comforter, and friend. A very discreet adviser; slow to speak, and slow to wrath; patient to

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wait and hear any side, and all sides ; and then forming and giving out a judgment which is about as sure to be right as anything human is so. Preserving, perhaps, the golden mean between McClellan's caution, and Sheridan's dash. You never find him expressing a hasty opinion regarding an important matter. He thinks once, twice, three times, before he gives you his conclusion. "A fool uttereth all his mind : but a wise man keepeth it in till afterward." And how holily and unblamably he has behaved himself among you ; how he has borne you on his heart and in his toils—and what rich, ripe fruits have here been grown and garnered for your profiting and God's glory ; and how, under his ministry, you have been prospered,

exchanging the former sanctuary for this one, more comely and convenient—and how, best of all, this church has been visited from on high with showers of blessings, and been built up a spiritual house, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable, well-pleasing to God—all this is known to you and to many, who rejoice with you to-day—this Silver Wedding-day of this pastorate here.

A twenty-five years' ministry among the same people, and the mutual affection between pastor and people never stronger nor fresher than to-day—never more radiant with all brightness, and redolent of all sweetness. Twenty-five years—and here he is, still at his post, watching for the souls of the men and women born into this world during

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his life among you, and marrying the children of those whom he baptized in infancy. Twenty-five years—great advantage—time for the growth of acquaintance, good esteem, and confidence, telling, better than words can tell, of the grand beneficence and benefit of a permanent ministry. And God grant, if in his good pleasure, that the sacred relation may yet continue a blessing and benediction in long years to come!

I find, on looking back, that I have spoken of “wouldn’t bes or have beens.” Dr. Todd would not have been a good diplomatist; Mr. Mitchell would not have been a good reformer, image breaker; Dr. Rogers wouldn’t be a good monk, nor Professor Day a good Methodist; and Dr. Hall

wouldn't be—well, I don't know what he wouldn't or couldn't be and do, with God's blessing, in any line of Christian and ministerial goodness.

Twenty-five years—and what a hold Gordon Hall has on this people and the people of this region! I am thinking of one of your grand old elms, that by time and trial has struck down deep into the ground its thousand tough and stringy roots. Long may he be spared to you, and late his departure for the skies. So shall he

“Be the sweet presence of a good diffuse,  
And in diffusion ever more intense ;  
“So shall he join the choir invisible,  
Whose music is the gladness of the world.”



REMARKS MADE AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE CENTENNIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE WESTHAMPTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

MR. CHAIRMAN:—In responding to the sentiment you have assigned to me, I regret my inability to characterize suitably the men who have labored here in the Gospel ministry. My knowledge of them is too imperfect; and there are here those who knew them much better. Abler tongues and pens have done them reverence; and their praise is in all our churches. Highly favored this people have been, and are, in respect of their pastors and teachers.

*Good* men and true, every one of them, from first till now, and now also.

And *able* men—educated, studious, scholarly; wise in counsel, and excellent in working—workmen that needed not to be ashamed. Father Hale, for example: a Yale graduate; massive judgment and common sense; clear and cool-headed, self-poised, sagacious; knowing perfectly when to speak, and when to be silent; eminent as a peace-maker, and making peace in all this region.

And *earnest* men; staid and quiet, yet with fire in their bones, and doing with their might. Foster and Bissell: with a force and fervor eager for any good fight and fray: steam-engines, yet well controlled; a hiding of a

power, and a showing of it, upon fit occasions.

And *pleasant* men. Coggin and Allender: affectionate, gentle, cheerful; living in sunny-side, and leaving behind them fragrant memories that shall long continue with us,

“Embalmed with all our hearts can give—  
Our praises and our tears.”

Mr. Drury, when preparing for the ministry, taught in my native Vermont town, during a winter, a day-school and an evening singing-school. I well remember his custom of closing the singing-school exercise with the jubilant tune and hymn—his favorite—

“Ye tribes of Adam join.”

With those early impressions, I

cannot now think of him otherwise than as a very pleasant man and minister.

And, not least, men sound and strong in the Christian faith. In this matter Father Hale struck the keynote, and his successors, in their singing and preaching here, have strictly *kept* the time and tune. "But here," says one, "you lug in the old catechism and primer." Well, what of that? This people are not hopelessly spoiled—not quite—not yet. Doctrine and dogma: the terms have no terror to me. And if any man, standing on this hill of Zion, "beautiful for situation," think men die of the Assembly's catechism, let him look around. Men do not die in that way, nor droop. Some of my pleasantest recollections cluster

around that old and venerable symbol. And some of my queerest and quaintest. I well remember, in my early childhood, being a good deal puzzled with those first two lines in the primer :

“ In Adam’s fall  
We sinned all.”

“ Sinnedall !” What sort of a craft could that be ? I may be told that such teaching and preaching makes a people sour, unsocial, demure. Not a bit of it. If I were in search of a man who carries about with him

“ wreathed smiles,  
Such as hang on Hebe’s cheek,  
And love to live in dimple sleek,”

I would look for him in Westhampton. The catechism taking the juices

out of a man, and leaving him a grim skeleton or a dry, hard stick? Beg your pardon. Just look at Dr. Dorus Clark! Bright as high-noon, and green and fresh as any amaranthine flower, and yet an octogenarian—and, oh, miracle and marvel! a lover, defender, and advocate of the Westminster Assembly's Catechism! Will wonders never cease? Sedate and sober-minded this people may be, but not glum and moody, not fretful and peevish, and creeping into the jaundice. "Like people, like priest." Did a mortal man or woman ever see Rev. David Coggin mope about a whole day in sulks and duskiness, a walking mummy? I trow not. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." This people have been fed with "food convenient"—

with knowledge and understanding, ministering to good health, heartiness, humor, whole-souledness, hospitality. Look upon these tables ; eat, drink, and be merry. I wonder if anybody, leaving this town, ever felt in him the sensation of hunger ?

But, really, isn't it a little hard to be brought up on such fare—such a proportion of doctrinal preaching—for nobody charges that the *practical* has been left out in the preaching here—and the *true* practical has, and must have, its foundation in doctrine. The Irishman didn't succeed in building his chimney from top downwards. True it is, some men are weary to bear these hard doctrines, so-called. It is told of the old minister of the 34th Massachusetts Regiment, that he sometimes



preached a whole half-hour on the doctrine of predestination; and that the soldiers, before the close of the service, were afflicted with such dreadful coughs as might have made a stranger fear for the health of the command. That will do for a war legend; and for such let it pass. Soldiers can be brave, and believing, and blithesome. In 1862, that blackest time in our late war, I heard Rev. Captain Bissell—afterward captain, and since doctor of divinity, missionary, author, and what more—say that he could not study; that he was aching in his very bones to enlist and push to the front. And push he would and did. But that was heroism, not hypochondria.

“Strong meat belongeth to them of

full age." This the people of West-hampton have demanded, and have had, and the demand and supply prove and approve each other. And it isn't going much farther to say that the people here have demanded *sermons* as *are* sermons—not rambling, off-hand talk. Get, if you can, so much as the *conception* of this people, sitting Sabbath after Sabbath, listening delightedly, or even patiently, to flippant volubility, "sound and fury, signifying nothing." No; they have not lived on sea-foam, and snow-broth, and whipped syllabub. They have had better fare, more substantial and sustaining and satisfying—the "sincere milk," and the "strong meat"—and have grown thereby. The *written sermon*, and delivered from the manuscript, most of

the time, if not all the time. The best hours and the best thoughts of the week through. "And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was *written* was upright, even words of truth." You may liken the quill or pen to the Michigan plough; and the man using it in patient plodding work during the week "is like unto a man that is an householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure"—not things old and old, but "things new and old;" while the off-hand extemporizer, ten to one, is shallow and superficial, scratching the surface; or, as we,

when boys, in throwing small, thin stones upon the water, called it—*skittering*. From my door at home I have often looked off westward and seen the glorious sunset, and the beautiful Westhampton church-spire peering up above its sylvan and green surroundings; but I have not seen in this quarter any pyrotechnics or fireworks, material or metaphorical or oratorical. Some men may tell me they spend as much time upon their sermons *without* the writing as others do *with* it. To such I would not say bluntly, “You lie!” but more blandly I would put it, “My dear, good friend, I very much want to believe you; I would if I could; but, pardon me, I can’t and don’t.” All honor to this people and their pastors

for their choice and custom in this matter.

Forty or more young men from this little Bethlehem Judah, getting a liberal education, and gone forth to bless the world ! Come the wise man and the scribe, and tell me how this is ? How otherwise, than through a Christian church and a Christian ministry, in long and bright succession—ministers, godly men, faithful in all their house, sound in doctrine, pure in life, feeding the flock—the sheep and the lambs—zealous, prudent, patient, contented ; loving all and loving much, and highly esteemed for their works' sake ; “as unknown, yet well known ; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing ; as poor, yet making many rich ;” “bringing many sons unto glory,” and then

themselves receiving the glorious crown. "Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord."



READ BEFORE THE CONGREGA-  
TIONAL CLUB AT GREENFIELD.

*WHAT were the influences or agencies inducing men to enter the ministry a generation ago?*

I shall not, I trust, be held too rigidly to the question. There is a negative side. There is a comparative view. I stipulated for freedom in consenting to write.

First and chief of those influences or agencies, *Home and home life as then*. Parental yearnings and trainings. Children not turned off upon Sabbath-school, as the manner of some is. Parental hearts and hopes, and prayers, that *one* of the *many* chil-



dren in the family—there *were* the many in those days—might be a minister. Mother at home, her seat and throne, best university in the world; *her* love and care and looks and lips; her high hope and low whisper that little towhead Jamie at her knee might some day be a great and good minister. A half-dozen such favored homes, and then, at school near by,

“A little bench of heedless bishops here,  
And there a chancellor in embryo.”

Ambition, say you? Put up thy sword; also thy microscope.—We are blessedly human, the best of us: certainly so when casting in our hearts what manner of man, or minister, this wonderful child of ours is to be. So,

anciently, Hannah lending her Samuel to the Lord. Elizabeth, hiding herself five months, and keeping up the while a mighty thinking. Mary, keeping all these things, and pondering them in her heart—and perhaps she didn't keep them very closely, either.

The ministers of *our* long ago—whence came they? Chiefly from the nursery and snuggery of such Christian homes. Dedication of children to God; the sign and seal; the vows, and prayers, and tears; parents and children together in the same covenant and holy bonds. It is what used to be heard almost invariably from candidates in their examination for the pastoral office, “My *mother* said and did thus and so.”

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2. Let us turn now from the home to the house of God. Not the greatest distance between. The *preaching*, a generation ago, *Gospel* preaching; doctrinal, practical, plain, pungent, and pressed home: a something that set one pondering his wicked way, and turning from it; that went to the heart, and fixed itself there; that set one asking, with Saul of Tarsus: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—that made a man take and keep for his motto, *Conscience and Christ*. Those great preachers, Finney, Nettleton, Burchard, Foote, Lindsley, Humphrey, Hewitt, Hawes, Lyman Beecher, N. W. Taylor, Bennet Tyler, Thomas H. Skinner, Joel Parker, and Edward N. Kirk—I have heard them all, and do well remember

their trend and drift. The sinner, self-destroyed, ruined, utterly undone; himself helpless, and his case utterly hopeless, except as God in his sovereign, free, electing love, may see fit to reach down his mighty arm and pluck him as a brand. Sinai first, then Calvary. There was the dying when the commandment came. By the terrors of the Lord men were persuaded. Nettleton's *Village Hymns*—"Awaked by Sinai's awful sound." The storm seen gathering, and the fleeing as a bird to your mountain. The sinner, trembling and almost despairing, and *driven* as well as drawn to seek and find in Christ the one and only Hiding-place. Darkest just before day. Penitential sorrow. Bow on the cloud, of light, indeed, but of

rain-drops also. The drops of grief *before* the light of smiles. The law our schoolmaster, and the law-work thorough. The fallow ground broken up, ploughed deeply, moistened, made mellow ; and now a garden of spices, plants of righteousness, strongest virtues, sweetest graces—humility and holy zeal. Such a *Rescue*, and therefore now the glad and thankful consecration to God and his service. None the less in those days the *inviting* voices, the sweet sounds—never were sweeter—but carefully in their due place and order. *After* the fire, the gentle, soft sound,—as Tholuck translates it.

Now the point and proof. Instance : that revival in Yale College in 1830-'31 ; the depth and power, the

passionate longing and pleading for pardon and peace with God ; and such numbers—undergraduates, tutors, and law-students — devoting themselves then and there to the ministerial calling. So in my native town in Vermont—seven hundred inhabitants—revival in 1826, fifty conversions ; pungent convictions, great searchings of heart, the surrender and rescue, the daring to hope, the stillness and chastened joy ; and of those fifty converts *seven* in no long time were found in our academies and colleges on their way to the Christian ministry. You might have supposed the good issue. It is in God's plan and method. It is a deep philosophy. It is plain law of cause and effect. It is Scripture—loving much because for-

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given much. It is song—loving Him who first loved me.

But again, 3, as to the *ministry itself*—the high estimation in which it was held, and of which in good part it was worthy. In more senses than one the calling was a *high* calling. The *pulpits* were high. The minister was *the* eminent man among a people; was the one *educated* man among most peoples; was revered, consulted, deferred to; was oracle and umpire; held the fort by a sort of divine right; was called a *divine*; *was* divine, in the Unitarian sense of divine; heard, as others did, the high-sounding cymbals, "*venerandi ac reverandi*." Something of a prize to be coveted, such a place and position among men; something of a goal of honor for you,



perhaps, if, a little aspiring, you would attain unto what Dr. Cox would have called "the height of conspicuity." Fortunately, or providentially, rather, there was among the young men, fresh from the revivals, the experiences and consecrations we have spoken of, a piety that could, and did, in good measure at least, resist the temptations to arrogance and pride, and putting on of airs—albeit the tinsel and trappings of an earlier time, the knee-buckles and powdered hair, those prime essentials of dignity and gravity—not to say sanctity—had not yet quite faded from mortal vision. The Parson and Divine. It is quite conceivable that a good man and humble may covet earnestly a high position as affording him the better field

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and freedom to serve God and his generation. Certain it is, the young man, looking to the ministry in those early days, *was* regarded as worthily aspiring to place himself upon such vantage-ground. "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." Channing and Emerson agreed in calling the ministry the finest of all the professions.

4. The ministry in those days was held to be *the* post and place for *eminent usefulness*. If you want to do great things for the Master, be a minister. Mr. By-Ends and Mr. Money-Love didn't edge up to you with their soft suggestion, that you could be just as good a man, and do just as much good in the world, in some

other sphere of life, in some shorter, easier, *cheaper* means and methods—Christian Associations, temperance work, Sabbath-school, and personal effort. There *were* not *then* these open doors, or they were not known and recognized as now. William E. Dodge, cultivating, as he has done, a vast and varied field of Christian activities, would, in the earlier time, have been looked upon as little better or other than a picturesque anachronism—out of time, place, propriety, prophecy, or possibility—a somewhat of a sort with the man's conjecture that, in killing Abel, Cain must have obtained from Hartford, Conn., one of Colt's revolvers. No. Instead, *one* highway, cast up and prepared, a royal road, a king's highway for you, if you would

work and win—strike for the goal and the prize—be a minister and preach the Gospel.

Well now, a young Christian in the early time ; his conscience and consecration and good impulse. Can he attain to the sacred office? Should he attempt it? *Some* things will evermore seem adverse ; perhaps straitened means ; state of family ; time of life ; long toil of preparation ; long waiting ; perhaps lady waiting ; advice to the contrary ; uncertainty of success ; burdens of work and care in the ministry ; impulse to cut across lots, or climb up some other way—some one or more of these ready at all times to hinder and dissuade.

1. Wanted then, as ever, an *educated* ministry.

2. Such education, at the easiest, costs not a little.

3. By far the greater number in the ministry and adorning it are not from the rich—there *were* not the rich then as now—but from families of humbler means,—perhaps no means at all, except their riches in Christ. It has always been so, and will be in *this* land.

Now, our young aspirant of forty or fifty years ago. Many things *avored* his wish and choice. Parents will toil and economize to carry their dear boy through and up to a place so honorable, useful, and sure. The Education Society, a new thing and admirable, with Dr. Cornelius and Professor B. B. Edwards, rare men, with magnetic force to push its work, brings *its* offers and appeals, and throws into the ques-

tion a moral and material weight which, all things considered, it has not done since, nor can again. Expense of education comparatively small. Boy and family have not been frightened at hearing of college clubs and crews and contests, journeys, regattas, class-suppers, and secret societies, etc.—those abominations that make desolate. The *times*, not of telegraphs and rushing haste, but more patient and plodding, slow and sensible. Ten years not *then* so very long a time for getting ready to preach. Boy from plough, loom, or anvil, in happy ignorance of luxurious living; had never crossed the Plain of Ease, nor seen Vanity Fair, except in Bunyan. Boy inured to toil, and could endure hardness. William



Goodell, on foot from Templeton to Andover, with trunk strapped to his back, thereby gaining his bent form, a mark of honor which he could well afford to carry with him through life, as good old Jacob could his lameness, after having beaten that angel at wrestling. Boy and family have not had their eyes dazzled to blindness by visions of sudden wealth. Boy and family have not had their zeal frozen nor chilled by *scepticisms*, suggesting doubts whether this much ado about saving men in the present life and *present probation*, be, after all, so needful and wise. Haven't heard disheartening talk about the exacting demands of the age—how a minister must understand all mysteries, must know everything, and be everything and every-



where—must be Stuart, Woolsey, McCosh, and Chadbourne, all in one—pastor, teacher, and evangelist, all in one. Haven't heard a hue and cry about *a surplus of ministers*—a cry eagerly caught up in a later day, and sounded along the tribes from Beer-sheba even unto Dan: a great multitude of impotent folk at the Pool of Bethesda, or at a ministerial bureau of Boston, waiting for an angel to come down and put them in; or, a trial almost as humiliating, the walking through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none. Haven't read the parable, how sixty men took cars from Springfield for Boston; got out at each of twelve stations, and were counted over again—the same sixty, every time—and how, on arriving at

Boston, the identical sixty had become seven hundred and twenty—a great surplus of ministers! Haven't seen, week after week, a Monday's New York daily, showing how pestered and puzzled and perplexed a score of ministers have been to find or frame a *something* to preach upon, and entertain, and *draw*; and how, in their straits, they *did*, yesterday, preach science, ethics, esthetics, culture, the most advanced thought, marriage and divorce, sphere of woman, moral reforms, evolution, every *thing*, almost, except the Gospel of God's love and grace to dying men—or, as Mrs. Partington has it, "Dispensed with the Gospel." And, finally, the boy and friends haven't been told, to their amazement, that the average time of a

minister in one place and pastorate is about three and a half years ; then the breaking up, and *tearing* up, and a removal to—who shall tell him where?

No. The boy in those days, and yearning to preach the Gospel, was happily exempt from most of these and the like dissuasives. The aspects and prospects were brighter—in *these* regards at least. There were not seen in those days these so many things of a contrary part to dampen and depress a youthful and Christian ardor.

Boy up there at his work, and with his theme and hope : and so he walks

“in glory and in joy

Behind his plough upon the mountain side.”

He is *thinking*—thinking what to do—what he can and ought. He *can*

think. The isolation and stillness help him. He is not interrupted, and thrown off the track on both sides at once. He hears no railroad whistle. He sees no excursion train. He is not diverted to day-dreams about sociables and suppers and picnics, and festivals and concerts and lectures. He can think on and clear through to resolve. "Stillness!" But there is *music*; the air is full of it. Electrical currents, inspiration, up-lift, impulsions. Those wonderful *revivals*, and their baptism upon him. And missions, new, strange, wonderful. And Macedonian cries, and glad responses to them. The mountains labored, and brought forth *men* and *missionaries*: Pliny Fisk of Shelburne, Jonas King of Hawley, William

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Goodell of Templeton, and other Christian heroes, of like precious faith. The *spectacle*, as then looked upon : young men taking their lives in their hands, bidding farewell to kindred and country, cheerfully consenting to bear all the great perils and privations of a life in heathen lands, and, not least, never to return, never, no, never. And the Calebs were heard saying, " Let us go up at once, and possess it ; for we are able to overcome it." Peter Parker for China ; and the walls there to fall immediately, were they not, as those of Jericho had done. That grand man, Rev. Leonard Bacon, as you might have seen and heard him fifty years ago. Look into his face, shining as it had been the face of an angel, while, in notes almost divine, he sings :

“ See the glory-beaming star.  
Traveller ! yes, it brings the day,  
Promised day of Israel.”

Hear Dr. Griffin, closing his missionary sermon with ecstasies and transports :—“ I see, I see,” etc., and

“ Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round.”

Had not the millennium already dawned ?

The situation as then ; the field, the calls. Would not the young man, loving and yearning, and come to the kingdom at such a time, respond, Here am I ; send me ? I think he would. I think he did.

May an old man, in closing, say a word personal to himself ? The *ministerial brethren*—I love them more

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and more as the years come and go, and more highly esteem them for their worth and work's sake. If I might go back, and choose my way of life again, I would choose *the Christian ministry*, as preferable by far to anything else this world could offer me. I should like right well to do my life-work over again, and would do it better next time, God helping me. I think I would.



## FIRST LETTER FROM THE ISLES OF SHOALS.

APPLEDORE HOUSE,  
ISLES OF SHOALS, N. H., *July 23, 1879.*

SOMETHING of a transition from northwestern Vermont, on Lake Champlain, to this island, east from mainland, out on the sea. And how to get here. Take cars at Boston, on the Eastern Railroad; two hours' ride, through Chelsea, Revere, Lynn, Beverly, Ipswich, Rowley, Newburyport, and Hampton, N. H., to Portsmouth; then a steamer, ten miles east by southeast into the ocean, and you are landed on this island of rocks—the largest of several equally rocky.

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Odd place, you say ; and so it is. Rocks to grass as ten to one. One hundred acres, and upon them four calves, and not a sheep. The traditional New Hampshire sharpening of the sheeps' noses would hardly keep the creatures here above starvation. No sea-beach here ; the huge waves beat against the ledges. No surf sea-bathing here—water too cold. There is somewhat of *still*-water bathing in two large ponds. Into these the water at high tide is let in, and is then *kept* in, by closing of gates, as in the locks of a canal, till the water is sufficiently sun-warmed for bathing.

You are ready to ask, What is there here to attract visitors from city and country ? Very much—specially to those seeking health and invigoration.

The sea all around—"mighty monarchy of waters"—the tonic breezes, the coolness, the wildness, the waves, and the fishing; and this last, *you*, Mr. Editor, would very likely place at the head of the list. One more, and chief of the attractions to many, a finer Hotel than can be found elsewhere on or near these eastern shores. Kept by the Loughton Brothers, who were trained to the business, and inherited the property, the island entire, from their father, who died several years since. This Hotel, besides cottages, has three main buildings, the largest in the centre, all in range, separated by narrow spaces laterally, and united in front, westward, by a common and continuous piazza, five hundred feet long. The

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dining-hall will seat, comfortably, four hundred at once. It is a first-class house, and will compare favorably, as to table and its appointments, with the "United States" and "Grand Union" in Saratoga. You would say so, were I to send you a bill of fare. Prices nearly the same in this as in those. Buildings not so gorgeous, yet quite sightly and comfortable. Best of beds and bedding. Sixty rocking-chairs on front piazza, besides one in each bedroom. Abundance of sofas for lounging and lolling. A full complement and variety of fixings and furnishings for ease, comfort, pleasure, and profit, also, if you will. Bible in every bedroom. Billiard-saloon, bowling-alley, ball-room, band of music, and *bar*—this last in the rear basement. I have

not seen it, please. There is, I think, very little of rum-drinking here. I have seen none, nor the effects or signs. The island lies off against both Maine and New Hampshire, and as to liquor-laws, is, perhaps, amenable to neither. The rooms are generously supplied with books. Newspapers, writing-desks, paper and envelopes, all free, and as much as you will. Theatre and concert-room, chapel and hymn-books. No expense spared. No pinching of image and super-scription out of a penny. No attempt to solve the problem of how much to get from how little of giving, or how to fleece most with feeding least. The most courteous and obliging of landlords, intent to meet, and, if possible, anticipate your every

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want or wish. Servants and service in the dining-room the best. Small table, and a trained waiter at each. The two head-waiters young men, the rest Yankee girls—the comeliest-looking set to be found in any dining-room in America, so says my neighbor mess-mate enthusiastically and truthfully. And *you* would say it. I didn't mention card-tables and playing. While I am writing this, a dozen men—United States Senator Thurman, of Ohio, so likely to be our next president, perhaps, among them—are playing at whist in the room next me. We have a steamer from Portsmouth twice a day, bringing mails from Boston, New York, etc. To find yourself, of an evening, reading the New York morning papers of the same day, away so



far down east on the great and wide sea! What marvels! What a contrast to things old and vanished! The first mail-carrier between Washington and Boston was placed under bonds to achieve the distance in fourteen days! *Now* the pace of as many hours is too lax and lagging. Shall a man yet come to be so hasty and swift as to run away from his shadow and himself?

And our *company*, at this hotel, now three hundred. They are from far and near—St. Louis, Chicago, Philadelphia, New York, and many another place. They are of the choicest. The solid men of Boston are here in large force, representing millions in wealth—solid men and solid women—the latter specially so, some of them



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freighting into the hundreds. The Boston *ton* and upper-crust are here—real gentle-folk — courteous, affable, simple and natural in mien and manner; no starchiness and “stuck up,” and putting on of airs, as in the Saratogian shoddy from New York. Dresses plain. No long trains, either of cars or clothes. Dress as you please. Free and easy. Never a more agreeable set. The coarse and rough, the pushing and pretentious, are not here. Would they were nowhere.

We have preaching services on Sabbath, the last by Dr. Peabody, of Harvard University. He gave us an excellent discourse. Nearly all the visitors were in attendance. Do you ask how we while away the time?

Plenty of ways. Now the band. Now songs by the best Boston voices. Now a ramble on the rocks, and then a sitting on the water's edge, to see the monster waves swell and surge and break at your feet, and the whitening sails off at sea. And, in the evenings, to look off landward, and see the government light-houses on a long stretch of shore. And then the chat and stories, and the arrival of steamer with mail, and letters from home, and papers; and the evening in your room, and reading by best of gaslight; and the breakfasts and dinners and teas; and then—speak it softly—the splendid *fishing*, and plenty of luck! Have been out at it two forenoons. Am not an expert, but can lose my bait, and get the hook

into my fingers, and miss getting the fellow up and out, as fast and often as the very adepts. And the sun and these winds, to put a new *face* upon you, for better or worse — *mine's* several shades nearer to—well, I will not slander the Africans, nor the Indians, either. Every one in his own order and color—Mr. White, Mr. Brown, Mr. Purple, Mr. Beach, and myself just now somewhere in “the middle extreme.” I don't like fishing. It involves the giving of too much needless and profitless pain to creatures that won't harm you, and can't resent nor protest. I am ready to say of fishing for mere sport as Cowper says of hunting:

“ Detested sport,  
That owes its pleasure to another's pain.”

If I wanted the *food, that* might excuse. I do not read that Peter and Andrew fished for the fun of it. And *they* used the *net*, and not the hook. Sentimentalism! some one says. Let him say it. "I, also, will give mine opinion."

You may think we suffer here from the cold. No, sir. Over-coat in mornings, if needs be, with exercise, and good wood fires in open grates in half the evenings. Out in the open air freely, with or without head-gear, and clad less warmly or more, and yet not one among all the three hundred guests has a cold. The salt air accounts for this. You couldn't begin to bear the equal exposures on land with the like impunity. The air is bracing. You must stir about. No one here complains of the cold. No one is set

to shivering and teeth-chattering, or is thrown into the slough of "Oh, dear suzzes." Marvellous stories are told of the health-lifting here in some instances. Six pounds gained in one week by an in-landsman who came here a week ago, pale, stooping, and wheezing heavily. Bethesda—but the pool is larger.

One week here. We, brother and myself, propose, D. V., to start a week from to-morrow for a week at Nantucket, not for a better place, but for another and variety, and soon home, we hope—home and friends. "No place like home." No play so pleasant as *work*. No friends so beautiful as one's own—as mine to me. And so, as my good friends from the Emerald Isle would say, "The top of the morning to you."

## SECOND LETTER FROM THE ISLES OF SHOALS.

APPLEDORE HOUSE,  
ISLES OF SHOALS, *August 16, 1883.*

WITH a little time and pains-taking curiosity one may find a good deal of real interest in this group of islands. Since writing you last I have been rambling over "Star Island," a few minutes' sail south of our Appledore. In a *religious* point of view, I think the "Star" must have stood eminent above the other islands—six in all—eight in low tide. Standing up on high ground, or rather rock, is a little church, "pointing with taper spire to heaven"—little used now, but having

a history. On the north outside, inserted in the wall, is a marble tablet with this inscription :

“GOSPORT CHURCH.

Originally constructed of timbers from the wreck of a Spanish ship, A.D. 1685. Was rebuilt in 1720, and burned by the islanders in 1790. This building of stone was erected in 1800.” Reliable tradition says that eight of the wrecked men were buried near by. This building — very strong — walls nearly three feet in thickness, of heavy stones and carefully laid, is neatly kept. Plain benches, with backs — twenty-four in number — these with pulpit and platform of the same wood, two chairs, straight-backed and cane-seated — the whole painted in deep



red—darker now for age. Once in a while a preaching service is held there.

Farther south, on this island, is the graveyard in which “the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.” Two of the graves are marked by large sandstone slabs, resting on piles of stones, matching them in size and shape as well as a rude but reverent masonry could be looked to do such work. One of the stones bears the name of Josiah Stephens. Died July 2, 1804.

On the other stone is the name of “John Tucke, graduate of Harvard in 1728; ordained July 26, 1732; died here, August 12, 1773.” The memorial words over these two are singularly affectionate and grateful; the closing line over Mr. Tucke, saying of him, that he was “A careful physician, both

of the bodies and souls of his people. In memory of the just."

The rest of the graves have boulders for headstones, with no traceable inscriptions; only here and there a stone can be distinguished as noting the sleeping-place of one who was once, perhaps, a prince of the people here—perhaps "the manliest of ye all." A few more years, and these rude stones will give the stranger or a dweller here no sign to distinguish the "inches few" where the generations here have their sleeping-places—"the last of earth."

Overlooking the sea, at the extreme south end of the island, is a monument on a granite pedestal, in memory of "John Smith, who was Governor of Virginia, and Admiral of New Eng-

land. Was born in Willoughby, England, in 1579; died in London in 1631." "These islands, properly called Smith's Islands, were discovered by him in April, 1614, while, with eight others, in an open vessel, he was exploring the coast from the Penobscot to Cape Cod. *Vincere est vivere.*"

A little way west of this, and overhanging the sea, is another tablet, telling a story less grand, maybe, but more touching and tragic. Clambering with care part way down the beetling ledge, you find, pendent against a perpendicular wall of rock, with a something like a rocky seat beneath, a board three feet square, painted, and inscribed (the work carefully done in paint) with these words :

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“MISS UNDERHILL’S CHAIR.

Miss N. J. Underhill, for two years teacher of the youth on Star Island, was dashed by the waves from this rock, and was drowned, September 11, 1848, and was much lamented by this people.”

I should add, that the sea must have been at the topmost of its “raging” to reach her at that height; for, though down some way from the top, the “chair” is still high above the sea’s usual reachings.

One of the most touching things I have met with at the Shoals is a private burial spot, perhaps twenty feet square, inclosed in a wooden, picket railing—the work said to have been done by the father, Rev. Mr. Beebe, with his own hands—covered

all over now with a thick growth of shrub willows; a dell scooped out in shape of a bowl; gate shut and locked; yet a something is there which the inclosure cannot, or does not, keep from human feet and eyes and hearts. Getting over the fence, as others have done before me (I was alone), and stooping my way along under and through a tangle of willow branches, I reached the centre and lowest point of the plat, and there found, what is almost hidden from an outside viewer, a monument of finest marble, four square, tapering slightly, six feet or more in height, and resting on a granite plinth. At the base of this column (on all sides, I think) is the name BEEBE. In a row, on the east side of the ground, are three small

headstones, perhaps eighteen inches high, with the names of those and all who have been buried there. Turning back now to the column, and tracing one side of it from top downward, you read :

“JESSIE. Died May 30, 1863, aged two years.

“You are, dear child, ‘far, far away,’  
Yet near in spirit, too ;  
Welcome indeed will be the day  
That brings us all to you.”

“MILLIE. Died June 12, 1863, aged four years. Dying, she kneeled down and prayed, ‘Please, Jesus, take me up to the light place.’ And he did.”

“MITTIE. Died June 23, 1863, aged seven years. ‘I don’t want to



die, but I'll do just as Jesus wants me to.'"

Let the reader note the above dates. On inquiry, I learn that the parents, and so the whole family, have passed. Mr. Beebe was greatly beloved in his labors on these islands. The parents died and were buried elsewhere.

What volumes, unwritten, except in God's book of life and love, do those few memorial words imply! What mysteries of Providence—"a great deep," "deep in unfathomable mines," "deep as the boundless sea." What sorrows and tears! What hopes, that cannot be crushed, or "crushed to earth, will rise again." Standing, or rather stooping, there, and tracing those few simple lines, and letting



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fancy fill up the story as well as it could—poorly at best—there came with unwonted power to my heart those blessed words of Jesus, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of Heaven.”

## A SERMON ON THE POWER OF HABIT.\*

Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.—Jer. xiii. 23.

IN Scripture, and in our common speech, there are *two* “cannots”: one, meaning the want of power; the other, the want of will. I “cannot” lift a mountain—I haven’t the power: I “cannot” do this or that thing you ask of me—I am unwilling to do it; it is against my way of thinking, my principles, my habits, my circumstances and convenience. The

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\* This discourse was written with no thought of publication. It is inserted here at the particular request of friends.

Ethiopian “cannot” change his skin ; it is impossible to him ; it is against nature. A man accustomed to do evil “cannot” cease from it ; he has no heart to stop and turn ; a habit upon him holds him to the wrong.

I am to speak of the *habits* we form, and which form us to good or evil.

The law of habit is a *pervading* law of man, and runs through all the elements of his life, as do the arteries and veins in his animal make. We see its operation in the *little* things of our everyday life—things of the body, the mind, the heart. It is a great achievement when an infant for the first time toddles across the floor ! What a glee the little hero has and gives, and how he repeats the act from very exuberance of delight ! He is a Columbus,

discovering a continent. The first steps of going alone! Was ever wonder greater? But, grown to manhood, he makes whole journeys in almost utter unconsciousness of any act of the will, without which a single step cannot be taken. So of one's gait in walking—peculiarities of attitude and motion, bend of the head, or swing of an arm.

Thus it is with *bodily* habits—they cling to us—they are part of us—a second nature. Your hand-writing—*yours*—recognized and accepted as yours, whether found in the hasty note of to-day, or in your last will and testament.

Now, the *spiritual* in man is far more susceptible to influences giving us a fixed *moral* form and pressure.

A mere *dream* leaves on you a shadow which it takes you days, perhaps weeks, to shake off. "Only a dream." True; but that something stays long in spite of your philosophy.

Of these our habits, then, I remark :

1. They are *necessarily* formed. The question is not of whether, but of what. Habits of some sort you must form—you are forming, every day. You couldn't help it if you would. It is a law in our make and moulding. It belongs inherently to all action, all growth, all life. That child on the floor—boy, with two old shoes for oxen, or girl with doll or kitten—will, with admirable ambition and enterprise, repeat an effort fifty times to fix that thing just right. You wouldn't repress this zeal in that child, your

child, noise or none of it. You might be destroying a roll of grand prophecy if you did. You might be undoing the miracle of a tired mother's great love and great hope. The child is reaching up for excellence—is following after, if that he may apprehend. He is in college already, and is learning faster than most college students do.

So of all experimenting. So of all apprenticeships in arts and trades. So of learning to play on an organ or piano—this going over and over a thing, till practice brings facility, mastery, perfection. It is something very wonderful and instructive, this pluck and patience and persistence through years and years to reach our palms and prizes.



Nor one habit alone. The forming of one renders easy and probable the forming of other and kindred habits. One virtue introduces a whole sisterhood of virtues, as the evening star leads the nightly train. One vice enfolds a whole brood of vipers. Lying or profanity is the Trojan horse, entering a city to destroy it. You look upon the swearing boy as bad already, perhaps all through.

2. Our habits are *early* formed—in great part in childhood and youth. Then is the nature most impressible and most flexible. Then we take our shape and color. Then are the soft clay and bird-tracks, which men of a thousand years afterward shall be looking upon with wondering eyes. You cannot bend nor straighten an



*old* tree to your fancy. You must begin with the sapling and tender plant. "Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined." "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Oh! the boon of a Christian home! The parental love, and care, and counsel, the prayers, the Scripture reading, and the songs of praise! The silken cords, the sweet captivity, holding you to the right and true and good. Not often is a young man, all right at twenty, found afterward flying from his orbit, and swinging blind amid storms of error and profligacy. A good setting out in life, we all say, is vastly momentous. Oh! how many histories tell us that our early life is formative and determinative! Then

is the spring-time, and the seed-sowing.

3. Our habits are *silently* and *imperceptibly* formed. Much as in the great forces of nature. The sun and stars move in silent procession. So with electricity, and magnetism, and gravitation—mighty forces, and marvellous in their effects, but giving no sound. The thunder is noise, but is harmless; the lightning is silent, but rends the mountain. The ocean cable stirs no ripple. You stand in a forest, and think of the great miracle going on in silence round you—that forest growth! and

“ The sound of dropping nuts is heard,  
While all the trees are still.”

Or the grain-field in June—marvellous that process, the growth and ripening,

but there is no sound. Your clock ticks off the moments for you : it is the clock, not the moments, that you hear.

“ We take no note of time, but from its loss.”

Much so, my friends, is it with our habits—a silent growth and procession. They *steal* upon us like a thief in the night. They creep with soft, velvety step. They take us unawares. That unguarded youth is all unconscious of the malign work going on in him : not a suspicion that he is forging chains and fetters with which the Philistines shall some day make him grind in their prison-house, and use him for their sport. It is a sapping and mining in the dark, at the seat and citadel of life—of all that

makes life worth living. Putting that poison-cup to his lips—not a thought that *he* could ever be a slave to the drink-fiend. Not he ; no, never, nor possibility of it. “ Why, man alive, do you think I am not my own master ? ” But you see him afterward — and how changed ! how the demon *has* him, and mocks his groans and tears. Is this fiction ? I wish it were. But no ; it is just what you and I have seen and sorrowed over—the young, and beautiful, and strong, broken, wrecked, slain upon their high places—sunk to depths from which we never see him rise. “ Died he not as the fool dieth ? ”

4. Habits are *rapidly* formed. Though silent and unperceived, the process hastens to its issue. The bird

hasteth to the snare. There are "feet that be swift in running to mischief." There is, indeed, a diversity here, as in nature elsewhere. There is in botany the century plant. There is in sacred history a Jonah's gourd. It was miracle. But there is something very like the miraculous in the swiftness with which vice sometimes leaps to its goal in shame and sorrow. There are coral islands which insects have been centuries in building. But islands have, in one hour, been heaved up from the ocean's bed. Men for ages have been repeating the Latin poet's saying: "The descent to hell is easy." Our down-grades give rapid travelling. You have seen a young man go down as it were by a bound, from apparent virtuousness, into a

depth of villany, where none could look upon him, except with mingled pity and loathing. Probably the bitter waters, which you saw come to the surface, had for some distance been coursing their way underground. The tree which the wind blows over is found to have rottenness at the root. Very likely the process of degeneracy and decline is usually more laborious and gradual than it appears to be, to one looking at its sad issue. Many a one has to dig and delve to reach the lower deeps. "The wages of sin is death"—that is, if you want perdition you must *work* for it; but the *gift* of God is eternal life—that is, if you want salvation you can have it as God's free gift, through Jesus Christ. To reach the terrible doom, one must

force his way over mounds and barriers that infinite love has reared to stop him—I mean, a youth brought up under the sweetness and light of a Christian home and nurture ;

“And when he falls, he falls like Lucifer,”

perhaps “never to hope again.” It must be so, for our life itself is but an inch or two.

5. Our habits, once formed, are apt, are almost certain, to *remain* upon us. They cling to us, and hold us as with bands of steel. To say of one that he has become habituated to an evil way, is understood to be much the same as saying he will go on in that way to its goal and finish.

The *drunkard*, for instance : Oh, the cords, and chains, and cables bind-



ing him, body and soul. Will he ever free himself? Marvel if he does. Dismantled wreck, and drifting. Will-power gone. Would, but cannot. That awful curse and thralldom. Better to wear iron clamps on every limb of his body. Only let the *mind* be free. A human being and rational, made of God and for God and glory, but made himself a bond-slave to such a demon! Reason with him? Reason with the winds. Expostulate and entreat? But he knows, and feels too, more about it than you do or can. Never did wolf or tiger hold his victim more remorselessly. In our old school geographies was the picture of a horse and his rider, struggling and dying within the coils of an anaconda. Thus of one habit. Much the same in all

courses of evil and sin—this holding and staying property and power. Once entered on some evil way, and committed to it, and how hard it is to stop and turn. Thus of idleness, falsehood, profanity, keeping bad company, prodigality, profligacy in every form. Once the mounds of virtue swept away, and the bitter waters become a desolating flood—a Conemaugh horror, shocking the world.

Bear in mind, my friends, this bondage of habit pertains to *all* sinful ways. There is a habit of scepticism and unbelief, a habit of cavilling and contempt toward religion and its professors, a habit of thoughtlessness, prayerlessness, procrastination. “I suppose I should attend to the subject (religion) were it not for the wretched

habit upon me of putting off everything to the last minute." Such the answer not unfrequently given by a man when pressed with the gracious call. And doesn't the man live on and die giving no sign? Amazing thing that a man can so live and so die under Gospel light. What motives and mighty influences urge that man to turn from his way and live! But in despite of all, and in resistance of all, he presses on in the "old way," trodden by the wicked in years how many, and in numbers who can count? Runs that way blindly, recklessly, madly; and the end is death. Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! Ah, my friends, there is a "*bondage* of corrup-

tion"—“a *body* of this death.” “His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.”

The text has led me to speak of habits which bind to *evil*. But there is a brighter side suggested. *Good* habits : what they are, and what they lead to. Wonderful the unanimity in men's beliefs and confessions here, whatever their own conduct and course of life. That wickedest man is human still. With choked voice, and with tears, he says : “Go, my boy, go to that city ; be brave and true, and shun the evil. Play the man. Give us joy of you.” Divine preacher, for once, that father, despite his own practice. I thank him for his sermon. Astonishing thing that a *father* could be less than

divine to his child anywhere, in anything.

But these good habits : habits of temperance, chastity, and that "cleanliness" which, you often hear said, "is next to godliness;" habits of industry, order, truthfulness and fair dealing; habits of candor, and charity, in judging; habits of self-control, and the soft answer which turneth away wrath; habits of valiancy for the true and right; the courage to say, *No*, to all askings of wrong; habit of submitting questions to second thought, and conscience, and the Bible; habits of friendliness, courtesy, gentleness toward all men; habit of a pleasant look and word to children, wherever you meet them—a whole mission in itself, and of the best; habits of keeping

at home, and improvement of time ; habits of observation, of study and reflection ; habits of prayer, and Bible-reading, and Sabbath-keeping, and sanctuary-attendance. These good habits—rich cluster—how they adorn the person and life—wisdom, more precious than rubies, and than all the things thou canst desire.

And then the *little* things we may be doing to others every day—things having the quality of mercy, which is twice blessed—“it blesses him that gives, and him that takes.”

“ If, in our daily course, our mind  
Be set to hallow all we find,  
New treasures still, of countless price,  
God will provide for sacrifice.”

These little blessednesses we may be

having and giving—giving spontaneously, naturally, as a flower gives perfume, not because it makes an effort, but because it *is* a flower—little things as they come to hand—"the next step in the path of God before you": fill some young life with sweetness; steady the tottering steps of the old man and gray-headed; send a note of cheer to a sick one; place a flower on a craped door-handle; lend a hand to a tired toiler; take back to your neighbor the ox or sheep that is going astray; replace the rail that has fallen from his fence; "speak a word in season to him that is weary;" smooth some brow furrowed with care; brush a tear from some sad cheek; kindle a fire on some cold hearth; bring some wanderer back



and home ; tell that wicked man that Christ “loves him notwithstanding all,” and stands at his door, knocking, and waits to come in and sup with him ; give a cup of cold water only, if all you can—*something, any* thing, where want is, and love can : oh ! to think of it—a life thus filled up—“marked with some act of goodness every day” —“some softening gleam of love and prayer.” *Little* things ? No ! they are angelic, divine—of sweet significance, and mighty power—pattern of heavenly things—a following of Him, the adorable Source and Author,

“ Who gives its lustre to an insect’s wing,  
And wheels his throne upon the rolling  
worlds.”

“ A whispered word may touch the heart,  
And call it back to life ;

---

A look of love bid sin depart,  
And still unholy strife.  
No act falls fruitless ; none can tell  
How great its power may be,  
Nor what results enfolded dwell  
Within it silently."

In all this I am supposing a case, yea, better, I am describing many an *actual* case. A young man, a Christian, building himself up in all the virtues and graces, coming to have, and enjoy, and show them as the habit of his life, as the character for which he is known and honored ; and bringing him at last to his crown in heaven. Silent process, here again ; like footsteps of angels, like the flight of time, like growth in the trees. He isn't thinking of *habits*, but of *duties*—how he may please God, and do good to men.

He doesn't see the growth in him, but in no long time finds and feels its blessed force and effect—virtue, a freedom, a strength, a joy, a life, a great salvation. See him give and lend—good heart, indeed, but good habit also—and thus the charm in his alms-deeds—the ease, naturalness, spontaneousness. You would not like to be told that your friend's gifts to you have cost him a struggle : rather say of him that the gifts were the easy, spontaneous outcome from his good nature—his make up and measure—all he is and is known for. Suicide means an act, or a man doing it. Just so the sound, giving the mere name of many a man, is instant and inevitable suggestion of whatsoever is good and noble in heart and life. “A good

name is rather to be chosen than great riches." And think of how much such a name implies and stands for, of first things, and last, and chief, in our present and our forever. *Cave*, then, how we build. Or, changing the figure: We reap as we sow, in kind and in measure. "We sow an act, and we reap a habit; we sow a habit, and we reap a character; we sow a character, and we reap a destiny."

Two *ways*, and two *ends*, then—sin and sinful habits, a bondage; or piety and its habits, a freedom—the liberty wherewith Christ maketh free. That bad habits do bind and enslave is what we all see, is universally confessed. Who denies that? Not one. But, on the other hand, there are many, especially of the young, to whom religion

appears little else but hardship, restraint—a gloomy something, to be put off, and pushed aside while we dare—to be submitted to when we must. Greatest of mistakes this, and most calamitous—Satan's master device. Moses chooses his lot with God's people—prefers it before all the treasures in Egypt. Did he ever regret that choice, think you? Mary chooses the good part; did she ever regret it? So of Ruth, and many another. To be on the Lord's side, consciously a child of his, and have all his yours; to love him, and serve him, in his glorious kingdom—to have in you the new heart, and the new life—life divine, spiritual, mighty, eternal; to love all men, and to be doing them all the good you can; to have faith's victory, and

hope's anchor, and to know, that when this life's inch or two is over, there is for you the glory and bliss eternal in heaven. Any bondage in this? Oh, no; it is freedom, liberty, in the highest conception of it—it is joy and peace—it is glory and blessedness. You all know it is. There isn't in this assembly one but says it is, and but would act upon it, but for the lie in his right, and those whisperings in his heart—the great enemy of souls, “with all deceivableness of unrighteousness” using his arts to deceive and destroy. Take, again, this one Scripture verse: “The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law”—no law to condemn, nor to enslave—

nor to restrain you even, except from sin which does enslave and degrade. "But then," says one, "religion implies sacrifices, self-denials, crosses, warfare." Yes; but think of the glorious company with you and for you: God, Christ, the Spirit, the church, and all good angels—all things yours—a mighty array—and heaven at last. "To him that overcometh." Is there anything nobler than that? "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith." Oh! to be able to say that!—to say it *now*, and to say it when all the shadows and shows and shams of this vain world are gone as a dream—and then to add with the Apostle: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the



Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day."

A young man or maiden, planted in the garden of the Lord—garden of lilies and spices—and nourished there by all the blessed agencies and influences of God's redeeming love and plan ; and soon rooted, built up into Christ in all things ; fruitful in every good work, strengthened with all might, according to God's glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness." Beautiful picture—not mine, but the Bible's. "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season ; his leaf also shall not wither ; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Battles—perhaps scars—they are honorable

scars, and victory at last ; labors, and then the heavenly rest ; struggles, conflicts, but the Delectable Mountains in sight ; Jordan, but the sweet fields ; the cross borne for a little, and then the crown worn forever ; sighs, yet singing :

“ All our conflicts end in everlasting rest.”

Gave up the pleasures of sin for a season, and gained the pleasures for evermore at God's hand.

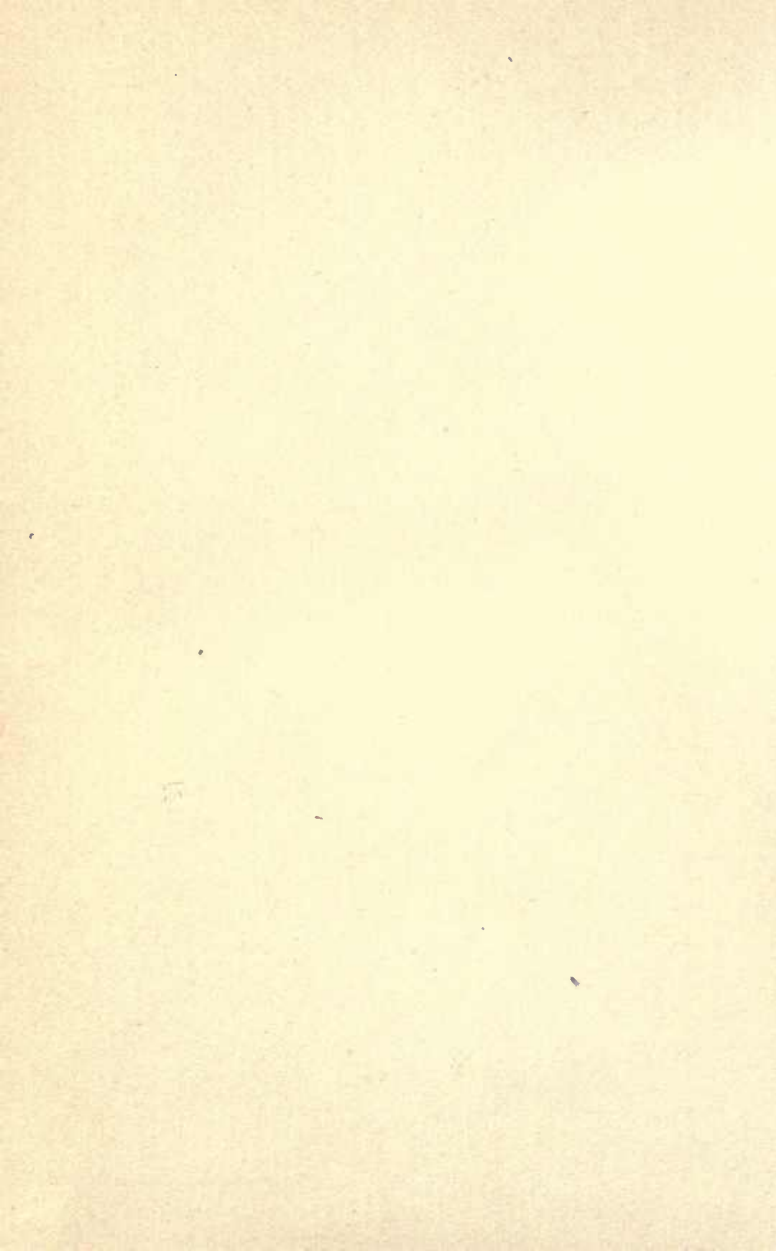
My dear young friends, will you not, like Moses, and like Mary, choose the good part ? Will you not choose it now, to-day, and so receive at last, and how soon, the welcome, Well done !

“ They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament ; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.”

















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